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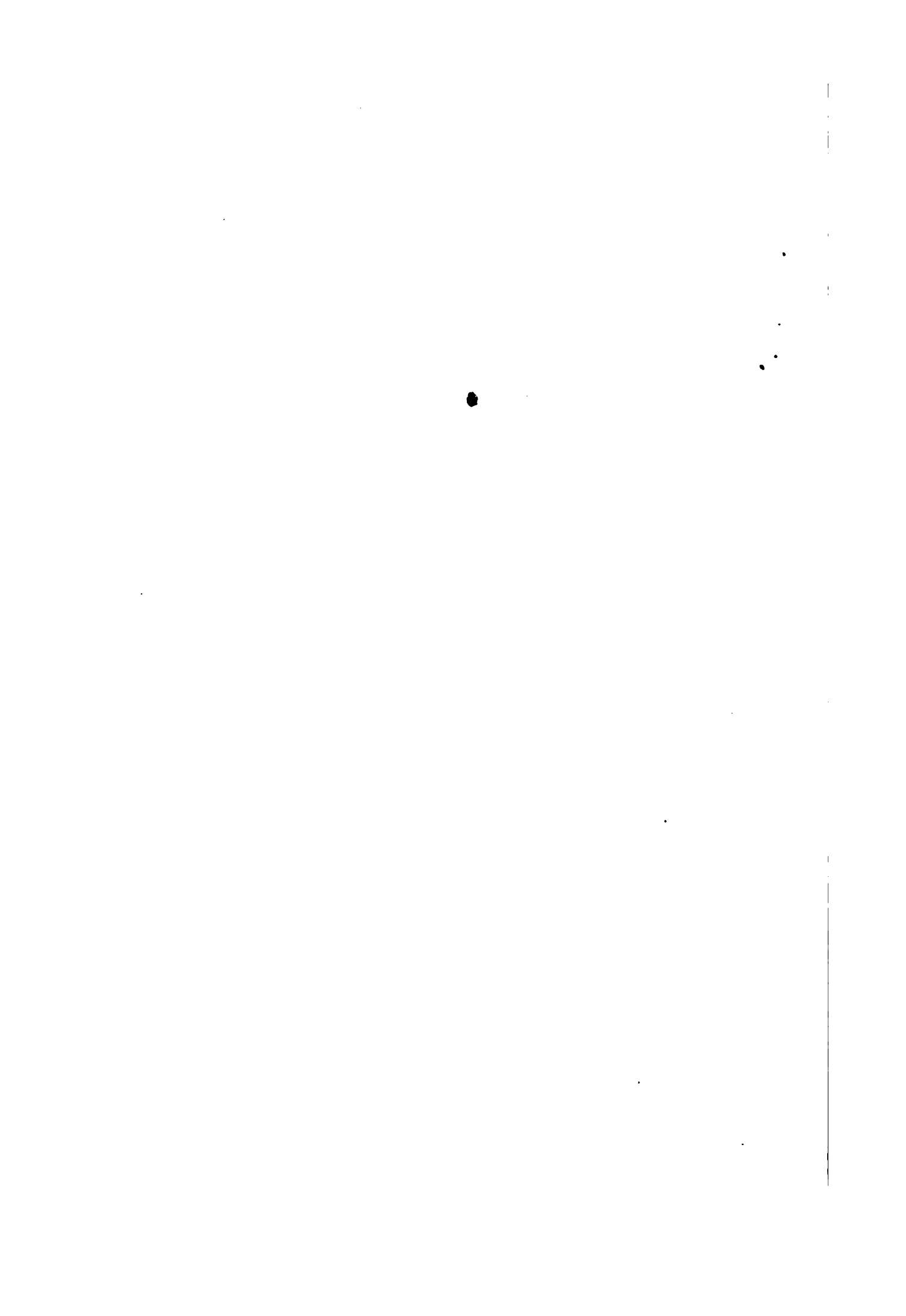


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OLD ENGLAND

**"THE ROOTS OF THE PRESENT LIE DEEP IN THE PAST, AND
NOTHING IN THE PAST IS DEAD TO THE MAN WHO WOULD LEARN
HOW THE PRESENT COMES TO BE WHAT IT IS." *Bishop Stubbs***

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PLATE I

**BRIDGE OF ROMAN DESCENT NEAR MIL-
FORD IN SURREY WITH A GOOD COTTAGE
OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY**

10/1/08
2

OLD ENGLAND

HER STORY MIRRORED
IN HER SCENES

^

WALTER TEXT BY
W. SHAW SPARROW

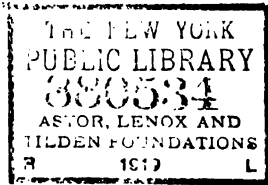
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PLATE II
PETERBOROUGH, WITH THE CATHEDRAL
IN THE DISTANCE

INTRODUCTION

ART AND LANDSCAPE AS SOCIAL HISTORY

“**M**EN of genius come out of the dark,” said Ruskin, and live most gloriously in the light after they are dead. They work to satisfy themselves, and die (as a rule) before they have raised the public to their own level; while men of second-rate talents, gravitating by instinct to the public taste, may become as popular as music halls, and as ephemeral as topical songs.

Besides, those who live near to great men can scarcely expect to see them in focus, as a whole and in the right perspective; it is distance that lends correctness to our views of real genius. For a similar reason the Swiss are unastonished by their own mountains, and do not feel much tempted to climb the peaks. This perilous exercise they leave to the professional guides, as we hand over to connoisseurs and critics the work of discovering the hill-top men in art and literature.

These and a number of other thoughts in the same matter must be often present to the mind of any one who is at all concerned in the study of English rural painters and their places in the perspective of history. The greatest among them,

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with one exception, were scarcely seen by their contemporaries, whereas a good many of the smaller painters were accepted as giants. To-day, on the other hand, the Witheringtons and the Creswicks are forgotten, while the big men whom they eclipsed—Cotman, for instance, and Crome and Constable—are up there, on the peaks of fame.

If we restrict our survey to English rural painters of the first rank, and put J. M. W. Turner aside as an exception, we find in their lives so much tragedy and long-suffering that it seems wrong for us to take pleasure in their work—work that brought *them* so little in the way of comfort and happiness. Good luck did not come to these great hearts, like the farm on the Sabine Hills to Horace. They were soldiers ever at war against adversity, making forced marches with hunger for a companion. Some died young after one sharp campaign, like Girtin, Bonington, George Mason, and Fred. Walker. Others lived to old age, and suffered much more on that account. Success and popularity came after their funerals; and then it was profitable to have a shrewd liking for their genius. Think of John Sell Cotman, one of the finest spirits in landscape art, who died miserably, worn out by money troubles which were not a bit kinder, I think, than actual starvation. At a public sale in 1834, eight years before his death, not one of his pictures fetched more than five pounds. In 1836 a masterpiece in water-colours was knocked down at eight shillings. Richard Wilson also, living between 1714 and 1782, had a desperate struggle

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all his life, fighting like a beaten general in rear-guard actions. Old Crome gave lessons for a living at Norwich, in a sleepy provincial town, shut up there like an eagle in an aviary of parrots. These great men, like Linnell, Holland, David Cox, and Peter De Wint, left behind them a magnificent legacy of work, more valuable to-day than gilt-edged securities. The best pictures by De Wint were oil-paintings, and as they did not appeal at all to his purchasing friends, the painter made a temporary burial-place for them in his attic, where they were kept on shelves till he died in 1849. Two of the very finest were then offered as gifts to the National Gallery, but the too-admirable officials declined to receive them. At the present time these paintings are the pride of South Kensington, and their worth in money cannot be less than £20,000. One day, perhaps, the State will take notice of these matters. Copyright should be permanent, and the State ought to keep a small share in the copyright ; then a percentage on all sales by auction may pass into a national fund to be re-invested year by year in modern pictures for the public galleries. Why should the dead enrich speculators of all kinds, without doing a pennyworth of good to living painters and sculptors, who suffer from neglect just like their predecessors ?

Even Constable had few friends who understood that his pictures were generously national, being as full as they could hold of English pastoral beauty. Constable, it is true, was not a master of imaginative composition in landscape, like Cotman.

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His design was that of Nature, and his colour also was Nature's. He knew by heart all the rich phases of English cultivated scenery, and none could paint as he did the moist silver tones in wet fields and valleys. He brought the dew and the rain into English art, which caused old Fuseli to say that when he stood before a picture by John Constable, he wanted to open his umbrella.

The French saw the worth of Constable at once, and borrowed from him the beginnings of a new school. In England, on the other hand, figure-painters, with few exceptions, were blind to Constable's merit. There was then a widespread notion to the effect that figure-painting had a much higher rank than any form of rustic art, giving to those who followed it an ascendancy over other painters, not unlike the ascendancy of kings over nobles. This absurd belief was thrust upon Constable after his election as R.A. in 1829. He was then fifty-three years old. Yet, to use his own words, he was made to smart under his election. The insult came from the President of the Royal Academy, Sir Thomas Lawrence, who told him he was "peculiarly fortunate" to be honoured by the Academy "at a time when there were historical painters of great merit on the list of candidates." In much the same way Temple disdained Swift; and the superiority of Swift over Temple was not much greater, perhaps, than that of Constable over Lawrence. At all events, the generations which have passed since 1829 have found in the art of Constable better qualities than those of Lawrence;

PLATE III
HALF-TIMBERED COTTAGES AT LUDLOW
IN SALOP



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INTRODUCTION

and, further, they have said nothing at all in praise of "the historical painters of great merit" whom Lawrence admired. These have gone to those dusty little shops in by-streets where dead reputations in art shine quite gaily amid a jumble of dirty carpets and broken bedsteads.

Several questions are suggested by all this want of sympathy for rustic and rural art. What, for instance, are the qualities of a good landscape painter? What is the meaning of the title "historical painter"? What is meant by history in art, and history in landscape? How would you answer the last question after studying the Frontispiece of this book, where the design includes a bridge of Roman descent and a beautiful old Surrey cottage? Or, again, Plate 31, chapter 3, is a fine picture of Kirkstall Abbey, and Plate 2 (page 1) a view of Peterborough, charmingly faithful and imaginative. What historical associations should be attached to these pictures? In what way are they connected with the progress of religious thought and work? In the Peterborough, above all, it is worth while to note how the Past and Present have been brought together. The cathedral stands far off on the horizon, in the glow of sunset, a railway train rushes across the middle distance, and in the foreground, close to the sheep, some tall marshland reeds remind us of those times when the neighbourhood was a vast swamp, inaccessible to most men, but not to those Benedictine monks who built their first home at Peterborough, A.D. 655. Why is it that many figure-painters decline to

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recognise the historic meaning in landscapes of this type? Why should they choose to be as dull in this matter as the general public?

Readers of the *Life of Morland*, by George Dawe, R.A., will recollect a very queer example of bad taste shown by a figure-painter in his criticism of rustic pictures. It will be remembered that Charles Lamb took an amused pleasure in Dawe, and wrote about him in a whimsical obituary notice. When Dawe wanted a model for the Infant Hercules, he hired from a showman a disgusting freak of nature, "a human portent," "a thing to be strangled"; and when he wished to do an allegory of the Thames, he told Elia that although swans were essential in such a picture, the price of a live swan was more than he was prepared to give, so he would take the *next thing to it*; adding significantly, that he would roast the bird after using it to paint swans by. Thus equipped as a humourist *malgré lui*, Dawe compiled his *Life of Morland*, and was grieved by the supposed vulgarity of Morland's choice of subject. Here is one quotation:

"His (*i.e.*, Morland's) gipsies are admirable, since in them vulgarity of character is appropriate. He often associated with them, and accompanied by Brooks has lived with them several days together, adopting their mode of life, and sleeping with them in barns at night. He excels likewise in bailiffs, butchers, ostlers, postboys, rustics, and, in short, in all these classes of society where we look for anything rather than refinement."

Poor Dawe! He never understood why Morland

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lived happily with those "classes of society" that gave England her best sailors and soldiers. To-day, the value of Morland as the Robert Burns of English rusticity is admitted by all students, particularly by those who wish to understand the rural life of England during and just before the great struggle against Napoleon. For this purpose he is a better guide even than the admirable Arthur Young, whose tours through rustic England contain many pleasant and graphic wood-pictures. To think about Morland is to be astonished by his diverse appeal; and even when he is hurried, or careless, or too leisurely, his style has the aroma of genius. His habit of mind being dramatic, he plays a great many different parts in his genial pictures, and is quite at home in all of them. He delights in smugglers on the sea-coast; press-gangs are as familiar to him as the sporting scenes and the village incidents that make up the best known portion of his art; he is as happy in a tea-garden with pretty women as in a yard with guinea-pigs and rabbits; and in certain narrative pictures, where he moralises over the ups and downs of character and conduct, his humour is more kindly than Hogarth's, and not a bit less popular. With this genius, so fresh and versatile, Morland makes our knowledge contemporary with his own; he has few rivals in the art of painting English social history.

This will not be disputed in Morland's case, but there are many rural painters, like Constable and Linnell, whom critics fail to place among the historical painters. There is a belief current that

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history in art is to be connected always with lay-figures ; and if the lay-figures are draped with costumes having no relation with the present day, they are said to be more historical than the historical landscapes in the present book.

On this reading, then, historical painters should think little of their own times and much of the long ago. To make the distant near and the past present is an essential part of history, of course ; but it is only one part. To see things as they are now—to make them so real to us that they will be as real also to our descendants—this, too, is a function of history ; and it is not less important than the first function of seeing things as they were centuries ago. John Constable, we may be sure, left us many records of country life and customs which are full of history. This may be seen even in small details. Visitors to the Diploma Gallery at Burlington House often ask themselves why Constable, in the famous picture of the “Leaping Horse,” painted a barge-horse in the act of jumping. It was because he took pleasure in all old English customs. Barge-men wished to be labourers on horseback, and to save themselves the trouble of opening gates along the tow-path, they taught their horses to jump ; and this good sporting custom may be met with even now, as in the country of dykes and black soil between Ramsey and Peterborough.

The painter whose work is illustrated in this book has, like Constable, a whole-hearted sympathy with bygone times. Indeed, his pictures are filled with ancient relics, bringing us face to face with

PLATE IV
ST. BERNARD'S MONASTERY IN
LEICESTERSHIRE



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INTRODUCTION

various forms of history—social, religious, military, manorial, and architectural. Mr. Orrock never forgets to remind us that the making of Old England is recorded in her landscapes by a great many things, some noble and beautiful, others homely, and others picturesque.

The great cathedrals, for instance, and the ruined abbeys, mark the changing fortunes of Christianity in England from early times; parish churches in rural places recall to memory the origin of our English parochial system and the growth of Teutonic settlements into the manor estates of the thirteenth century; and certain old houses like the half-timbered cottages in Salop, an excellent specimen of which is given in Plate 3, retain both the wooden framework and the thatched roof of Henry III.'s era. A few pictures by Mr Orrock, representing bridges and roads of Roman descent, enable us to pass in thought to those days when Britain was kept down under the heel of Rome's military despotism. Think of the generations which have trudged along those highways, on business, and for the purposes of war, and to be jolly at festivals; recollect what you have read about each generation; and instantly the roads and bridges are thronged with sixteen centuries of life; the bridges spanning all the years of England's progress, and the roads passing through time into the forests and the fens and wastes of primitive Britain. That is why a bridge of Roman descent is given in our Frontispiece.

English landscapes are rich indeed with historical

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memories. Often they are more valuable than a great many of the written documents accepted by historians. Ancient farms and manor-houses, for instance, if you examine them room by room, and study their plans and elevations, have more to tell you about the character and growth of village customs and manners than you can easily learn from manuscripts and books, authorities which often pass by in silence the everyday homes and their usages. When written documents are not topical and familiar, when they deal mainly with events of an exceptional kind, they cannot give us now a true glimpse into the heart of any epoch. They do not denote their periods like the domestic architecture represented in this book. And written or printed evidence in history may have other shortcomings. Is it false or is it true? As all emotions give colour to written statements, that question is never an easy one to answer. Each emotion has to be examined with the greatest care before the statement which it colours can be accepted or rejected. Further, the need of brevity in writing may distort truth in a great many different ways; and the result is that historians play the difficult parts of judge and jury without being able to put their witnesses under oath. If all the accepted authorities in English history could be summoned from their tombs and placed one by one in the witness-box, how many would repeat under oath all their testimony, and pass with credit a cross-examination by experts?

Some evidence, no doubt, can be accepted at a

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first glance, but very often it is the evidence of handicraft in art, not of words in a written document. Words never convey to any two readers the same amount of truth or of falsehood ; but when the things dealt with in written speech are handed down to us in a concrete form as work, we are able to form our own opinion ; and hence the value of old craftsmanship as a chronicler of truth. Old Age in all good work is a useful form of social history. This applies not only to manifestations of Old Age having the grandeur of cathedrals, but to the humblest goods and chattels, such as tables, and chairs, and knives, and forks ; these are as documentary as letters and diaries, and sometimes they have a wider range of interest and a greater charm. The rudest flint implements bring the pre-historic dimly into history, because they are facts of a social kind marking a stage of human effort, and confirming their own evidence of skill and taste, and of use and purpose.

Not less valuable, and necessary to the subject of this book, are the illustrations in early manuscripts, the topical sketches, caricatures, and miniatures. Among them there are many as familiar as a curtain lecture, the bedroom of the Anglo-Saxons becoming distinct and animated. We see also how tumblers and jugglers did their tricks, how boys trained themselves to be archers, and how woodmen lopped off branches till a tree became a stem with a crest of foliage on top, as in France to-day. That harvester is reaping corn ; he cuts it boldly in the middle of the stalks, leaving a great deal of

OLD ENGLAND

stubble for two purposes, partly for sheep and cattle to graze upon, and partly that it may rot into the earth as manure, just as the ancient Greeks enriched land with beans and the Romans with lupines. Many sketches represent women out of doors. This good farmer's wife on horseback sits astride like a man, while that great lady is seated on a pillion behind her squire, or lolls happily in her coach—a house on four creaking wheels, drawn by five horses harnessed in a row; and being upholstered with gay tapestries, and enriched with carving, paint and gold, it resembles the famous carriage for which John le Charer received £1000 in the sixth year of Edward III.'s reign, at a time when a revenue of £150 a year meant wealth. In another sketch a supposed blind-beggar shams blindness, for he is led by a fox, not by a dog. This satire is aimed also at the wayfaring pardoners and preachers, and there are times when Martin Luther is forestalled by many generations. One miniaturist portrays Renard the Fox as a pardoner of great authority, offering to a flock of geese the spiritual comforts he desires to sell. This caricature belongs to the fourteenth century, a time when speculative unbelief was common.

These sketches from ancient MSS. are evidently good historians; and as much may be said of innumerable later pictures, though writers rarely go to them for information. Look at the castle in Plate 8, an excellent drawing of Dunstanborough on the North Sea, so true in its dramatic effect that the North Sea fishermen would be astonished and

PLATE V

BRADGATE PARK, LEICESTERSHIRE, THE
HOME OF LADY JANE GREY: NEW-
TOWN LINFORD IN THE DISTANCE



INTRODUCTION

delighted (p. 24). It really is Dunstanborough, a castle certainly in ruins, yet stronger than the winds, though six centuries have passed since this descendant of a Saxon fortress was rebuilt by Thomas, Earl of Lancaster, known as "The Hog." If the presence of Old Age in our English landscapes were to be wiped out by industrialism, what would remain of that romantic England which we carry with us in thought to all parts of the world, and by which we are drawn back to her radiant country scenes?

Further, to live always in London, or in any vast city, is to be estranged from rural England, almost as much so as the English are in the Colonies; and this is why the love of English rusticity has begun once more to show itself in a multitude of picture-books, continuing those traditions that formed a nursing-school for Hearne, Girtin, Turner, De Wint, and many other masters of English water-colour.

In illustrated works the great difficulty is to find a scheme by which the pictures and the text will be bound together into a whole. The present book has eighty plates, all of historic country scenes, and the plan which I have tried to carry out is one suggested by the drawings. The chapters are necessarily in the nature of roundabout papers, but they give in the right sequence, I hope, the purpose of the plan, namely, to show what historic landscapes represent in England's progress from the coming of Cæsar to the present day.

The pictures by Mr. Orrock mark the halting-

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places in a rapid trip which he and I have taken together through our country's social history, from the Roman to the jerry-builder. As a leading authority on English Art in all its phases, Mr. Orrock has long been distinguished ; and his own rich varied work as a landscape painter, after the usual high winds of adverse criticism, has now weathered all the many changing tides of wayward fashion in technique.

On these tides painters in English water-colour have been carried here and there, to be thrown ashore where the Union Jack does not fly, and where the English people and genius are not in the least likely to found colonies for their arts. Meanwhile, Mr. Orrock has been strictly loyal to the classic traditions of English painting. Those principles of taste which guided Reynolds, Gainsborough, Romney, Raeburn, Constable and Turner, were very much better for him than fricassees of French aims and methods. Opinions differ always, but Mr. Orrock's pictures have qualities that last : they are transcripts learnedly painted from the finest rural scenes to be found in England.

The selection in this book was made from outdoor sketches covering fifty years of work ; and each scene may be accepted as a landscape portrait true in every way. To raise topography into art, to show with truth the beauty and spirit of English landscape, is one aim which Mr. Orrock has made real ; and his choice of subject is another strong point. Most landscape painters can select good subjects from a popular point of view. Mr. Orrock,

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as we have seen, does more than that. His pictures have fine themes, they connect the present with the past, they show many things which have influenced the well-being of England in her passage through centuries of unrest and warfare.

The chapters are arranged thus :

1. The Sea-Coast and the Sea.
2. The Influence of Bridges and Roads.
3. The Church in the midst of War.
4. How they Built in Old England.
5. War and the Ancient Castles.
6. Forests : the Conquest of *Anderida Silva*.
7. Archery in the cleared Forest Lands.
8. The Romance of the "Grene Wode."
9. The Lord of the Manor.
10. The Reign of the Sheepfolds and the Shepherds.

It is a scheme illustrating the different forms of War by which England was made as she is now. Vast and terrible forests had to be cut up by roads and turned into fields, "dens," "leys," wolds, farms, and villages. Without roads and bridges there could have been no chance of social progress. Those which the Romans built were preserved even by the Saxons and Angles, who in other ways did so much destruction, putting the clock back in England some four hundred years. The Roman occupation of Britain began in A.D. 43 ; it came to an end in A.D. 410, lasting in all for three centuries and a half. When the pitiless tribesmen of the Germanic race came with their lust of battle and

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slaughter, they found that every vestige of fighting spirit had been destroyed in the southern and mid-land Britons by twenty successive generations of military thralldom. Massacre followed massacre, and there was but one thing for ineffectual Britons to do; they fled to the mountains, and to the rarely visited depth of primeval woods, like the Anderida Silva; here they returned to their pre-Roman savagery, but renewed their manliness and self-reliance.

Then came the Christian missionaries for the second time. Under them, and in the midst of carnage, heroic efforts were made to heal wounds and to form places of shelter whence quietness and goodness could radiate. Christianity was a light in every home—a light and a discipline. It put a stop to infanticide, and forbade men to cast off their wives at will; it turned marriage into a sacrament, and under its influence, little by little, births and deaths became sacred events, by which families and their friends were united together with sympathy and affection. A feeling of sanctity was thrown over child life, and to the slave—as unable to defend himself as a child—a new hope came, the Church defending him in many ways. It demanded penance from the master or mistress who murdered him; it made him free on all monastic lands, and urged nobles on their death-beds to obtain peace and grace by following this example; it prevented slaves and their children from being sold outside their native places; and sometimes it enabled them to buy their freedom. Serfdom had disappeared

PLATE VI
OLD GEORGIAN MILL NEAR DANBURY IN
ESSEX, WITH A QUAIN T FOOTBRIDGE
OF TIMBER



INTRODUCTION

from Kent, the see of St. Augustine, at a time when it was prevalent in other parts of England. When the existing farm accounts of the Middle Ages begin, during the last ten or twelve years of Henry III.'s reign, there was no serf-tenure in Kent. This shows the permanency of St. Augustine's influence. If Christianity protected the weak, it did not forget to watch over the strong, denouncing blood feuds and revenge, condemning gluttony and drunkenness, and making battles less frequent and less horrible.

This was the Holy War in England, and recollections of it make an atmosphere that lingers about ruined abbeys, and magnificent cathedrals, and ancient village churches. Whenever a church bell sounds, we should hear in it the voices of St. Augustine and St. Columba.

Side by side with the teaching of Christianity, another kind of discipline became busy everywhere, the discipline of feudalism ; it curbed in a nomadic people the inborn vagabond, the gipsy spirit, and forced it to settle down and labour in the woods and fields. Many castles in English landscapes, ruined by Cromwell and the centuries, are derelicts of feudalism, and pictures of eleven illustrate the fifth chapter.

The feudal castles have been misunderstood by many writers, and there is also a delusion among people to the effect that castles were like robber knights or barons. In times of civil war some among them certainly got out of hand ; but their work (as we shall see), when considered dispassion-

OLD ENGLAND

ately and as a whole, was useful and necessary within certain definite limits.

After the chapter on castles, the clearing of the forest-lands has to be considered, a subject so varied and important that four chapters are given to it. The original meaning of the word field, a cleared or "felled" space in a wood, reminds us that England as we know her was literally hewn out of the forests.

Even at the close of the Roman domination, quite one-third of the soil nourished a tangle network of forest, shrub, and thicket. In the valleys, to be sure, there were strips of cornland and pasture; but it took many centuries of herculean toil to light up vast woods with sunny hamlets and with pleasant green leas and wolds. Some cleared lands became historic parks, like Bradgate, Plate 5, the home of Lady Jane Grey; and many of the finest prospect landscapes in England were reclaimed from primeval forests. This was the case in Plate 4, where St. Bernard's Monastery gleams in a delightful country which the Romans may have won with their axes from Charnwood Forest (p. 8). The district now known by that name has few trees, and its fifteen or sixteen thousand acres are littered with granite boulders, thrown up by some eruption an incalculable number of centuries ago, and marking to this day the graveyard of an earthquake.

The last chapters are given to the ordering of village life under the Lord of the Manor, his bailiff, the parish priest, the miller, and the shepherd. The parish priest ousted the town reeve; and his

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church, standing on a defensive mound, was used for many purposes outside those of a religious kind, but friendly to village interests. When the Host and the portable altar were removed, and the sacred vessels taken to the priest's cottage, a country church might be used as a market hall, as a theatre for miracle and mystery plays, and also as a meeting-place for the village festivals; and by this means it became in all ways the centre of parish life and progress.

Next to the priest and his church came the miller and his wife, who owed their rank to the fact that none could do without them. Each manor had its corn-mill, and everybody connected with the manor had to go there to have his corn made into flour. That was law, and we shall see how at last it stirred villagers into open revolt. Under this system, imagine the consternation which followed the breaking of a mill-wheel by a river in spate—such a river, for instance, as you will find in Plate 7—particularly when mills were built entirely of wood. Such disasters were frequent as late as the thirteenth century. Many instances may be found in Matthew Paris, and here is a graphic sketch drawn by him in the year 1256:

“ Three days later, an extraordinary storm, or a succession of storms of wind and rain, accompanied by hail, thunder, and lightning, alarmed men's hearts, and caused irreparable damage. One might see the wheels of mills torn from their axles and carried by the violence of the wind to great distances, destroying in their course the neighbouring houses

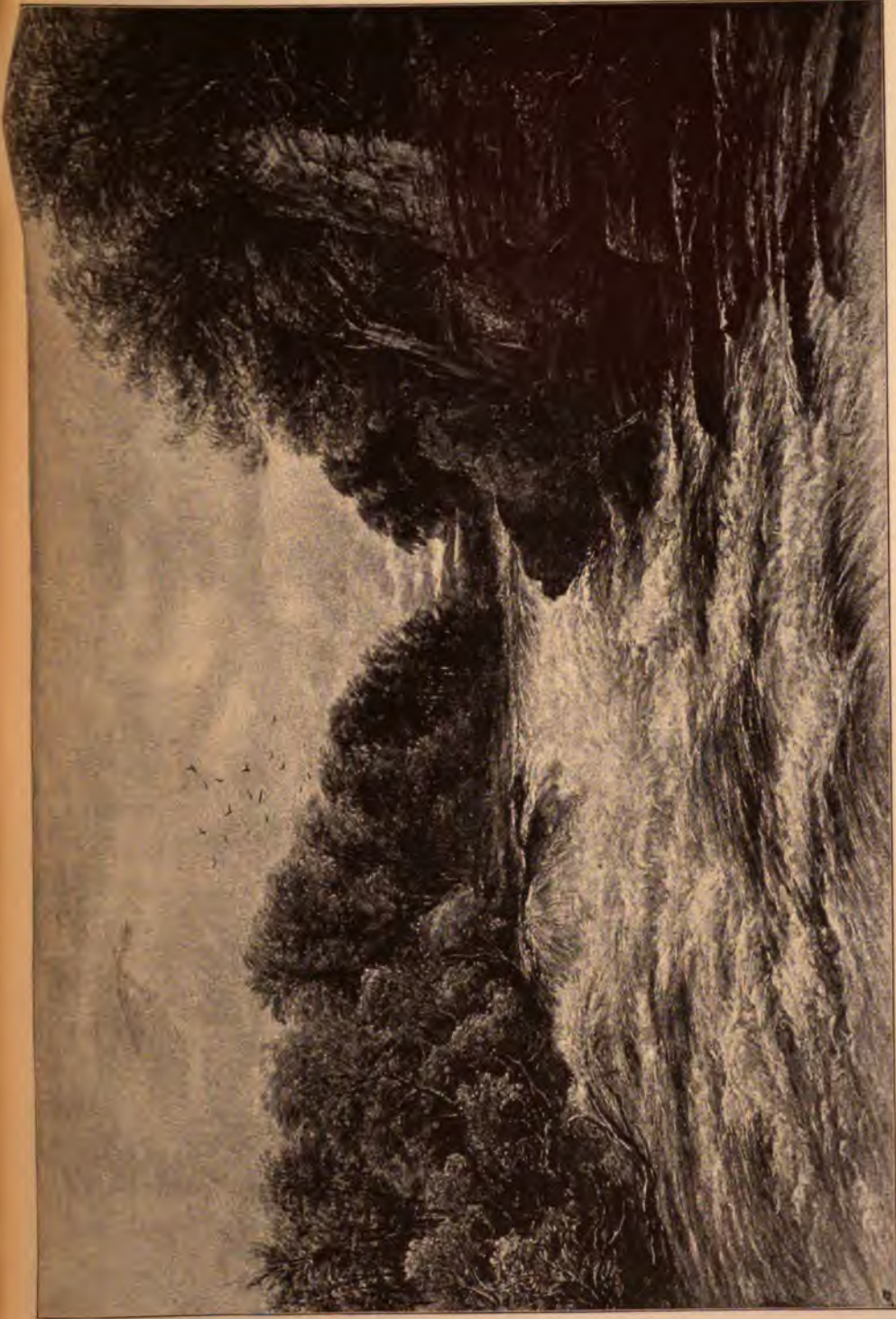
OLD ENGLAND

[evidently wooden huts or cabins], and what the water did to the water-mills, the wind did not fail to do to the windmills. Piles of bridges, stacks of hay, the huts of fishermen with their nets and poles, and even children in their cradles, were suddenly carried away, so that the deluge of Deucalion seemed to be renewed."

This picture is as old as the events described in it. Wooden buildings must have been very common in the middle of the thirteenth century. At Bedford, during the same tempest, six houses in a cluster were washed away by the waters of the Ouse, their owners having much difficulty in saving themselves. The storm scenes in Matthew Paris have not attracted the attention of historians. Yet the life of the people in mediæval England cannot be understood unless we keep in mind the havoc that tempests then made, and the inevitable fear that bad weather always caused in every part of the country. Families were often ruined by a storm which would be scarcely noticed at the present time, their frail houses being blown down like haystacks, and their sheep buried and killed under the wreckage of a timber shed. Thus at Abingdon, in June 1249, such a deluge of rain fell that rivers, overflowing their banks, carried away a chapel, the saltpits and mills, houses, and sheepcots with the sheep in them. At Windsor, in 1251, on Saint Dunstan's day, thirty-five oaks were split asunder or thrown down, mills were destroyed, some shepherds with their sheepcots perished, and Eleanor of England was in danger of her life, for the lightning passed through

PLATE VII
SPATE AT AYSGARTH FORCE, YORKSHIRE





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INTRODUCTION

her bedroom, where she was resting with her sons and attendants, threw the bed to the ground, and burnt it to powder.

These calamities, however, terrible as they often were, had in the long run a good result, teaching carpenters and masons to be thorough in their methods; and the same lesson was taught by the falling of church lanterns and spires. Wood covered with lead formed the earliest spires and lanterns; then, after a great many had been tossed into the air by gales, stone came into use; and when some of these were shattered by winds the value of building thoroughly with the best mortar was plain for every one to see. But the use of stone for the walls of water-mills came into vogue very slowly, showing how conservative manorial customs were. That wood was commonly used for water-mills in the thirteenth century is proved by the number of times that Matthew Paris made reference to their misfortunes, at a time when manor churches were usually built of stone. In Mr. Orrock's pictures the water-mills have masonry which is early Georgian in character. All are manorial by descent, and, having passed through some tragic vicissitudes, having been laid waste by war, destroyed by flood and fire, and left desolate in times of plague, stand at the present day on their old original sites, dating back to the foundation of their manor-villages. Each of these water-mills has a distinctive character of its own that parts it off from the others, and marks some difference in local building methods and traditions. Plate 6 is a

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typical Essex water-mill, Georgian in type, and placed in a strategic position away from the winds.

The mill grinding corn for the manor folk would complete my sketch of English village life, were it not that the sheepfold in mediæval times was of even greater importance than the mill, being the mainstay of every manor. Finally, there is one more influence to be mentioned in the making of Old England ; it is an influence that runs through all the others, determining their results ; and hence it is the greatest of all—the Sea. England has owed to the Sea all her fortunes and all her misfortunes ; it has been her guardian sometimes, and sometimes it has invited successful invasion.

When Napoleon was asked what meaning he attached to the word Destiny, he replied : “ Policy. That is the destiny of all races.” It has been England’s lot from the earliest times to have her policy dictated by the seas, and that will be her destiny till the tide in her affairs shall ebb for ever.

Under the sea’s direction she has played her part among the nations of the world, reaping victories while her rivals have gathered defeats. With repetitions of herself she has gemmed the ocean. Camden, one of Shakespeare’s contemporaries, spoke of her as “ The Lady of the Sea ” ; to-day she is the Leading Lady, the Sea’s Tragedienne. Even Shakespeare’s description omits the tragedy of her lot :

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“ This precious stone set in the silver sea,
Which serves it in the office of a wall,
Or as a moat defensive to a house,
Against the envy of less happier lands.”

This does not look beyond the defeat of the Armada. The poet's own forefathers came from less happier lands, and found the sea's wall no stronger than its defenders' courage and ability. English history to the Norman Conquest was a story of desolating invasion that came periodically in tidal waves, bringing with each wave a race of warriors far superior to the native population. Cæsar, it is true, was an exception. He came, he saw, he gained “copy” for his Commentaries, and that was all. For the sea at his base caused him so much anxiety, and did so many injuries to his fleet and naval camp, that it frustrated all his aims. He came twice on a flood tide, and twice he sailed backed to the Morini with the tide against him. It says much for his generalship that he was able to do this on two occasions.

CHAPTER I

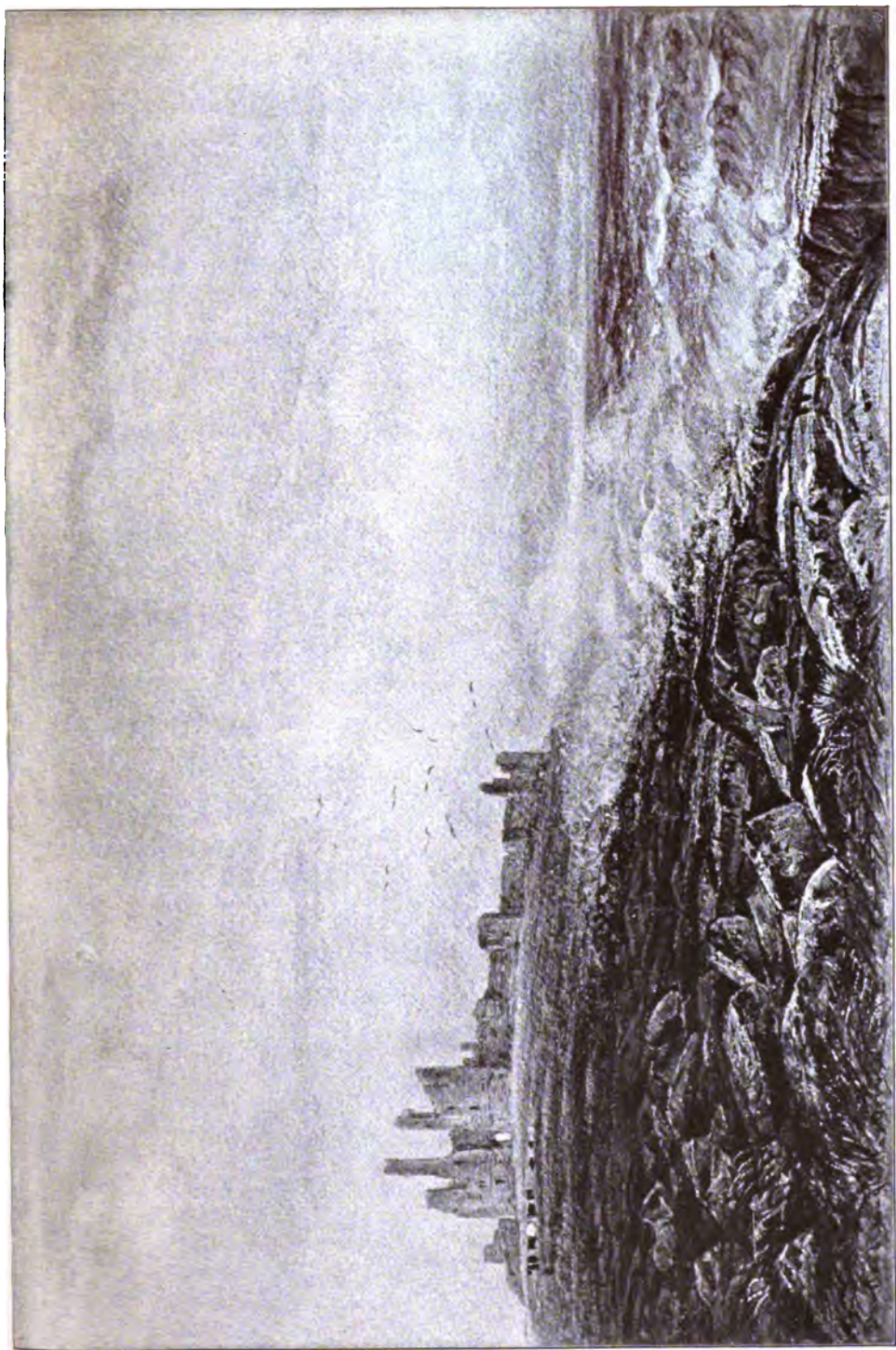
THE SEA-COAST AND THE SEA

WHERE did Cæsar land? Was it between Deal and Sandwich? Or was it at Pevensey, the subject of Plate 11? There has long been a widespread belief that he came to shore in Kent, near the place now occupied by Deal or Sandwich. Cæsar, in his Commentaries, wrote of Kent several times, and spoke of it as the most civilised part of Britain, and also as a maritime district to which trading-vessels were usually directed. But he never said that he landed in Kent. On the contrary, his remarks have a certain air of remoteness, as though he referred to a place which he had not seen.

Gaulish merchants in the Morini must have told him a good deal about Kent, since they traded to the Kentish ports. Nevertheless Cæsar expressly tells us that he was dissatisfied with the information, as he could not learn from it "what harbours were convenient *for a great number of large ships.*" This does not speak well for the landing-places in Kent as described by the merchants. Cæsar indeed made haste to get further details, sending before him "Caius Volusenus with a ship of war, to

PLATE VIII

DUNSTANBOROUGH CASTLE ON THE
NORTH SEA, SIX MILES NORTH-EAST
FROM ALNWICK, THE SEAT OF THE
DUKES OF NORTHUMBERLAND



WHERE DID CÆSAR LAND ?

acquire a knowledge of these particulars before he in person should make a descent into the island," and when Volusenus came back with news, Cæsar made his plans.

There are modern maps of Britain that illustrate our history up to A.D. 1066, and any good one will enable you to compare its geography with the landscapes suggested to your mind by Cæsar's Commentaries. Kent was the least wooded part of the coast lying nearest to Gaul; and for that reason, chiefly, it was the most civilised portion of the south and south-east. There were woods, no doubt, but the Downs were fertile, and the land as a whole was better adapted than elsewhere to the pursuits of peace; hence it would have been favourable to the Roman troops. This should be remembered in connection with the small measure of success that Cæsar met with, even in his own account of it, written tactfully to keep the Senate and the Roman public in a good temper.

Again, the Commentaries of Cæsar lead us to believe that his troops were harassed in three ways: first, by the sea at their base; next, by heavy armour; and third, by forests. As the natives were lightly armed and swift in their movements, the weight of the Roman accoutrements must have been a real handicap to Cæsar's legionaries; but it would be less serious in Kent than in more wooded districts, because the Britons understood forests instinctively, like the Germans. Their favourite battle-ground was a labyrinth of trees

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surrounding a cleared space in a forest's habitable parts, for the war-chariots could then make sallies from the woods and distress the enemy in a sudden and effective manner.

To find such forests as the Britons loved we must go westward along the coast till we come to the great stretch of uneven shore between Rye and Pevensey. In the time of Cæsar, and for many centuries afterwards, the present site of Rye marked the south-eastern edge of a vast and terrible wood. To the Romans it was known as *Anderida Silva*, a Latinised form of the original Celtic name *Antred*, which means uninhabited; and by the Saxons it was called the *Andredes-weald*. From Rye this forest primeval ran westward for a distance of rather more than one hundred miles, while eastward it threw into midland Kent some scattered clumps of oak, beech, and holly. A large part of Sussex and Surrey was made uninhabitable by the *Anderida Silva*. Even to-day, except on the sea-coast, Sussex can scarcely boast of anything better than a large village like Midhurst (= Midwood). Mr. Orrock, in Plates 9 and 10, gives typical and exquisite views on the Downs near Worthing, and shows us two places long since reclaimed from the forest of *Anderida*. The neighbourhood of one picture, the Chanctonbury Downs and Ring, well known to readers of Blackmore's "*Alice Lorraine*," is one of the sweetest spots in England, while the Ring itself is among the five highest points on the Sussex Downs. It is surmounted by a circular entrenchment, where neolithic weapons and Roman

DID CÆSAR LAND IN SUSSEX?

coins have been found, so this defensive work may have come down from pre-historic times to the Romans who transformed it to suit their own purposes. However this may be, the forest had clearings from the earliest times. There were many near the coast when Cæsar was in Britain. Some were natural open spaces, suitable for the pasturing of flocks and herds, while others had been made by the Britons, partly for their camps of refuge which they called a town, and partly for their detached houses. The early British fortresses were kept up in time of peace by the work of a whole tribe, not as places of residence, but as shelters against danger, for the Britons, like the Germans mentioned by Tacitus, did not care to live in village communities with their huts close together. The timber used daily in the enclosed camps, and for domestic purposes, helped to make cleared lands in the forest, and all good open spaces were drilling-grounds for the war-chariots.

Such is the country suggested by Cæsar's despatches—a great forest country with uplands, clearings, and patches of corn and pasture, as well fitted for native methods of war as it was bad for the heavily-armed Romans. So for reasons which I have given, Sussex and Pevensey seem preferable to Kent and Deal as a theatre for the two campaigns.

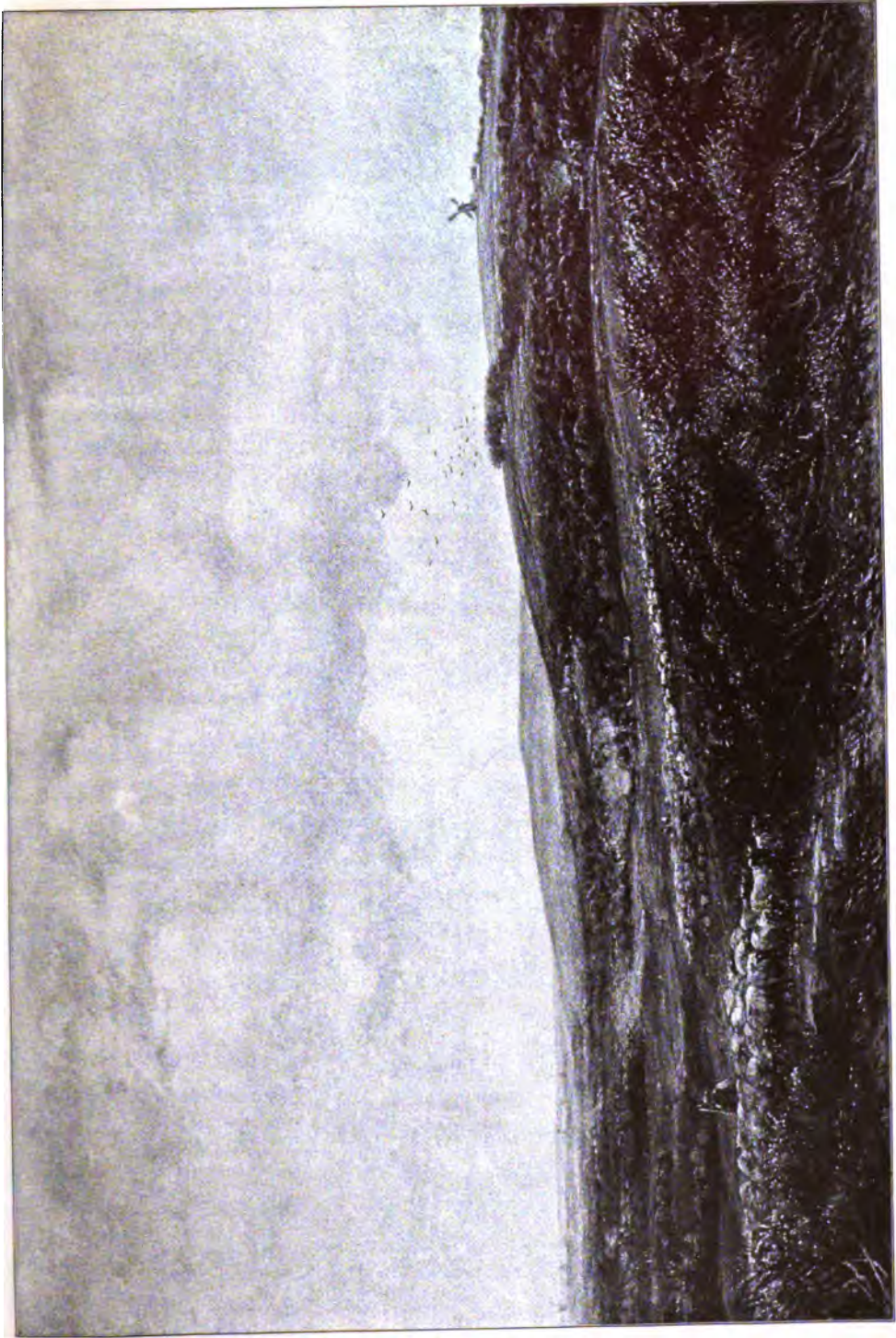
When Cæsar got his first view of the coast, "the nature of the place was this: the sea was confined by mountains so close to it that a dart could be thrown from their summit on to the beach." As

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this was by no means a fit place for disembarking, Cæsar remained at anchor till the ninth hour, and "then advanced about seven miles from that place, and stationed his fleet over against an open and a level shore." It is supposed that the mountains or hills were the White Walls near Dover, and that the sail of about seven miles brought the fleet to Deal. But the wording of Cæsar's text is even more applicable to the impressive Beachy Head, within a distance of seven or eight miles from Pevensey Bay. Apart from this, one passage in Cæsar proves that if he landed in Kent and kept his naval camp on the Kentish coast, he was one of the worst generals that ever commanded an army in time of war. The passage will be found in Book V. chapter 22, where we read how Cassivellaunus made a last effort to turn the flank of Cæsar's army along the coast, while the Romans were engaged in their operations against the royal camp of the Cassii, near the present site of Saint Albans. Cassivellaunus sent messengers into Kent, where, as Cæsar remarks, four several kings reigned: Cingetorix, Carvilius, Segōnax, and Taximagūlus; and these kings or chieftains were ordered to get together all their forces and to make, unexpectedly, an attack on the naval camp. We know not where the naval camp was placed. But if Cæsar landed in Kent and fought his way through Kent to reach the Thames and the great fortified camp of the Cassii, how came he to leave behind him all the Kentish chieftains, waiting in their own territories, and with all their troops, to cut his communications

PLATE IX

**CHANCTONBURY DOWNS, SUSSEX, ABOUT
SEVEN MILES NORTH OF WORTHING, IN
THE COUNTRY OF THE ANCIENT FOREST
OF ANDERIDA**



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PEVENSEY

and prevent his return to the sea? No general of genius, like Cæsar, would act in this wild and absurd manner.

Putting Kent aside, a good many things suggest Pevensey as the probable landing-place of the Romans. Cæsar came in both expeditions to the same part of the coast, and we have seen that the feeling of deep woods in Cæsar's narrative points to Sussex as a very likely district; but we must go beyond the time of Cæsar to the days of the Roman occupation of Britain if we wish to see what value was attached to Pevensey as a very weak spot on the coast. The village of Pevensey—for it is nothing more than a village now—was long the busy and famous town of Anderia, the camp of the Trackless Wild, where the Romans built one of the nine fortresses that gave strength to the coast from Anderia to Brancaster on the Wash. These defences were put up during the last century of the Roman domination, at a time when the Saxons began to sail over in their flat-bottomed craft for the purpose of harrying Britain. The most vulnerable stretch of coast, thus strengthened by nine fortresses, was called the Saxon shore; over it a Count was placed in authority; and this Count of the Saxon Shore had 4000 men as a garrison for his castles, and a fleet of ships to keep the seas from Brancaster to the Land's End. That Pevensey was particularly open to attack is proved in English history by three things: it was taken by the south Saxons in A.D. 491, when "all that dwelt therein" were slain; it was at Pevensey that William the

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Conqueror made his entrance into the drama of England; and third, the Romans took immense pains to defend this landing-place—a fact proved beyond all doubt by the remains of the majestic defensive wall which partly surrounds an enclosure of ten acres. At the south-east corner of this fortified place stands the ruins of a Norman Castle, first built by William's half-brother, Robert, Count of Mortain. It shows that the Normans, like the Romans, feared the open position of the town in its relation to the sea. The Roman wall, with its nine Roman towers, has extraordinary strength, proving that Pevensey was looked upon as a very vulnerable spot. We cannot be sure that Cæsar landed there, but probably he did. In any case Deal and Kent are not in the least degree possible.

A distant view of Pevensey, crisp in touch and painted with breadth and spontaneity, is given in Plate 11, facing page 36; and it will tell you that there is something un-English in the aspect of this village, something reminiscent of fishing hamlets on the French coast. Pevensey now rests in peace. It slumbers in a cosmopolitan long ago, just as waning nations fall asleep in the tombs of their greatest men. Even the sea has gone away from this part of the coast, leaving a mile between it and the old harbour. Till the beginning of the eighteenth century a channel ran through Pevensey Level and connected the harbour with the sea, so that boats of a fair size gave some air of trading life to this relic of Anderia. All the boats have gone now, like

MYTHS OF THE MIDDLE AGES

the great forest ; *Tempus edax* has devoured them up, and it is hard indeed to believe that this little peaceful village was long a nursery of the British Navy, being joined as a part of Hastings to the Cinque Ports.

Pevensey has associations with two sets of ancient traditions, which add much local colour to the present subject, and portray beliefs held by Englishmen when current history was in great measure a thing of popular legends caught up and repeated by chroniclers. The present-day historian gives little attention to the myths of the Middle Ages. As a rule he puts them aside as worthless. Yet the beliefs held by men, whether false or true, have an influence over character and conduct ; they issue into act, often to the great annoyance of statesmen, and always with some effect on the progress of events ; and hence they are of as much value as the modern research by which they are excluded from school histories.

Who, for instance, would not be glad to know what the ancient Britons thought of Cæsar's battles ? Cæsar himself, in a scrappy and patchy way, gives one side of a thrilling story, and it is only in the legends of the Middle Ages that we can get even distantly in touch with the other side. The fable history of ancient Britain has a great fascination ; and one chronicler, perhaps a mythic personage, who was much read in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and who went by the name of Matthew of Westminster, relates the British legends in a very pleasant naïve style, and his

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chronicle, translated by C. D. Yonge, B.A., is in the Bohn Library.*

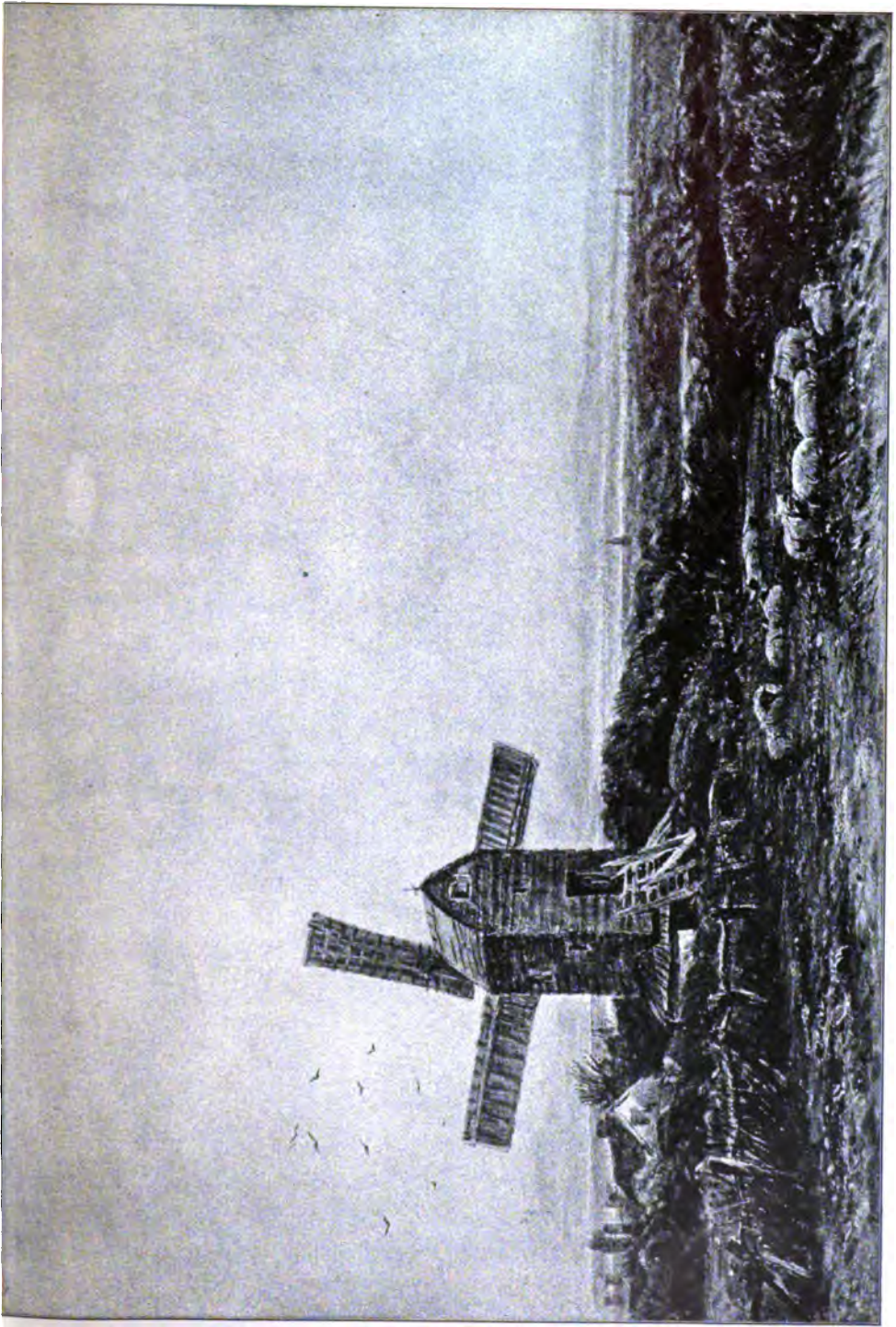
We read of a British king, Heli, a far descendant of Brutus, that supposed great-grandson of Æneas, who is said to have founded London 1100 years B.C. King Heli had three sons, Lud (hence Ludgate), Nennius, and Cassivellaunus. Lud came to the throne, ruled and died, leaving two sons, Androgeus and Tannancius; but they were put aside as too young to rule, and their uncle, Cassivellaunus, became Lud's successor.

Julius Cæsar, after sending ambassadors in vain, came over to Britain, entered the Thames, and brought his troops safely to land. The opposing armies met and fought for a long time with great violence. Then, all at once, the King's brother, Nennius, rushed in upon Cæsar, and with all his might dealt the Roman general a fierce blow on the helm. Cæsar was not dismayed. He put forth his shield and defended himself gallantly. With his sword he struck Nennius twice on the helmet, and

* Matthew followed the example set by Geoffrey of Monmouth, who was Bishop of St. Asaph in 1152, and whose belief in the legends which he related seems to have been sincere. Turner, in his History of the Anglo-Saxons, mentions it as a curious fact that Tacitus, Solinus, and Marcellinus Ammianus give similar traditions pointing in the same direction as the stories told by Geoffrey of Monmouth, Henry of Huntingdon, Matthew of Westminster, and other early chroniclers. But fables have always been as interesting as facts. Victor Hugo says: "History has its truth, legend has its truth. Legendary truth is of a different nature from historic truth. Legendary truth is invention with reality for result. For the rest, history and legend have the same aim—to paint under the man of a day eternal humanity."

PLATE X

**GEORGIAN WINDMILL NEAR WORTHING,
SUSSEX, IN THE COUNTRY OF THE
ANCIENT FOREST OF ANDERIDA**



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CÆSAR IN MEDIÆVAL LEGENDS

the Briton knew that he was dangerously wounded ; but in the second blow the sword glanced from the helmet and rang against the shield which Nennius carried ; there it stuck so fast that Julius could not pull it out, so Nennius himself laid hold of the weapon, and with its help he killed the tribune Labrenus and many other Romans. Towards evening, the Britons won a splendid victory. Night came, and during the dark hours Cæsar embarked his shattered legions, and in great disorder returned to Gaul.

The hero of the fight, brave Nennius, died a fortnight later, and when the Britons buried him they placed in his tomb the great sword of Cæsar, "which was named Bloody Death, because no one who was wounded by it ever escaped alive."

For two years Julius deplored his defeat. Then he crossed the sea to take his revenge, sailing once more up the Thames ; but in the river's bed, hidden by the water, Cassivellaunus had fixed good iron stakes, and upon these weapons many Roman ships foundered, with a loss of about a thousand men. Cæsar, after this shipwreck, landed with the rest of his army ; but the Britons attacked with so much vigour and courage that he was glad to find refuge on board his uninjured boats. The wind being favourable, the fleet sailed, and in due course arrived at the coast of the Morini, entering the port of Odra.

Cæsar began at once to make preparations for a third adventure, and in this he was greatly helped by disputes among the British, provoked by a grandson of Androgeus, who, after a banquet, quarrelled with

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a grandson of the King and cut off his head. For this act he was disgraced by Cassivellaunus, and when Androgeus found that the King would not forgive him, he threw in his lot with the Romans, sending ambassadors to the Morini accompanied by thirty-one children of the highest birth for hostages. Encouraged by this offer of help, Cæsar came for the third time, landing at Rutupium, now known as Sandwich, where Androgeus went to meet him. At the time Cassivellaunus was at war near the City of Trinovantum, but he hastened south and came upon the Roman army near Dover, where a tremendous battle was fought. Cæsar won, mainly because Androgeus at the point of crisis in the battle appeared suddenly out of a wood and attacked the British troops in the rear. The King retreated to a rocky hill covered with hazel bushes; it was one of the British encampments, and there Cassivellaunus was blockaded by the Romans. "After a second day had elapsed, when Cæsar was unable to compel the Britons to surrender, he determined to reduce them by famine, if Androgeus had not come to himself again, and felt some pity for his own nation." So he came in haste to Julius and told him that he had sufficiently revenged himself on Cassivellaunus. "You have made all Britain subject to yourself by my assistance," said he to Cæsar. He added that his own gods were not willing that he should allow his master to be condemned to a shameful death, or bound with chains. "Have pity on him, therefore, because he cannot be in danger while I am alive." And Cæsar listened and

THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS

made peace, the treaty stipulating that Cassivellaunus should pay to Cæsar from Britain every year three thousand pounds weight of silver, under the name of tribute. Then, having become friends, they gave one another gifts. Seven years later, Cassivellaunus died, and was buried in York. He was succeeded by Tennancius, the brother of Androgeus, for Androgeus himself had gone to Rome with Cæsar.

Such, in outline, is the legend. Though mythical, it seems to give very well the changing, protean gossip which must have circulated from tribe to tribe among the Britons. Two real events made a lasting impression on the popular imagination ; the one was the crossing of the Thames by Cæsar, and the other, the help which the Romans received from native chiefs. The legendary account of these important matters differs from the story as told by Cæsar. Still, when Julius forded the Thames, below the mouth of the Wey, sharp stakes were really fixed in the bed of the river ; and we learn from Bede, who lived from A.D. 673 to the eve of Ascension Day 735, that remains of those stakes existed in his time, so they must have been for many centuries objects of great interest around which popular traditions would gather and settle into permanence.

The other traditions associated with Pevensey concern the battle of Senlac, or Hastings, and the fate of Harold. In thinking of this great battle Englishmen are apt to forget that it was an affair not so much of William against Harold, as of

OLD ENGLAND

William's new methods of war against Harold's old-fashioned system, the phalanx of English axeman proving inferior to the Norman archers, and the heavy cavalry and footmen. It is suggestive also that the alleged death of Harold should be attributed to a wound in the left eye from an arrow—the very missile which, from the time of Edward I. to the reign of Elizabeth, was to be the symbol of England's might, a weapon dreaded by all nations, and protected by so many statutes and proclamations that archery was England's own form of national conscription. But—Was Harold really slain by the arrow? or did he recover from the wound?

Pictaviensis, chaplain of William the Conqueror, told one tale. He said that a body was found lying between the corpses of Gyrth and Leofwine, Harold's brothers; the features were so much injured that they were not distinguishable, but the body, from certain tokens, was supposed to be that of the English King; and Gytha, the mother of Harold, offered a ransom for it equal to its weight in gold. This offer William refused. Then he ordered his attendants to bury the body on the sea-shore, and said with disdain: "He guarded the coast while he was alive, now let him guide it after death."

Other stories were told in the next century. According to Malmesbury, the body was given to Gytha without ransom, and entombed by her orders in the abbey of Waltham, which Harold had founded before he came to the throne. But the tradition of Waltham Abbey said nothing about

PLATE XI

PEVENSEY, SUSSEX, THE LANDING-PLACE
OF WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR, PERHAPS
ALSO OF JULIUS CÆSAR



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THE FATE OF HAROLD

Gytha ; and the finding of Harold in this tradition is finely romantic. Two canons of Waltham, Osgood Cnoppe and Ailric, watched the battle. They saw the death of their benefactor Harold, and got leave from William to search for his corpse ; but they looked in vain among the dead. So Osgood went back to Waltham and returned to the battle-field with Editha the Fair, Harold's mistress, in the hope that she, guided by her love, might be able to find the King. Editha, weeping bitterly, searched the field, and chose from among the slain a mutilated body ; this was taken to Waltham as the corpse of Harold, and buried in the east end of the choir, some Norman earls and gentlemen being witnesses of the ceremony.

Years afterwards, says Francis Palgrave, "when the Norman yoke pressed heavily upon the English, and the battle of Hastings had become a tale of sorrow, which old men narrated by the light of the embers, until warned to silence by the sullen tolling of the curfew, there was a decrepit anchorite, who inhabited a cell near the Abbey of Saint John at Chester, where Edgar celebrated his triumph. This recluse, deeply scarred, and blinded in his left eye, lived in strict penitence and seclusion. Henry I. once visited the aged hermit, and had a long private discourse with him ; and, on his death-bed, he (the hermit) declared to the attendant monks that he was Harold. As the story is transmitted to us, he had been secretly conveyed from the field to a castle, probably of Dover, where he continued concealed until he had the means of

OLD ENGLAND

reaching the sanctuary where he expired. The monks of Waltham loudly exclaimed against this rumour. . . . They pointed to the tomb . . . inscribed with the simple and pathetic epitaph, *Hic jacet Harold infelix*; and they appealed to the mouldering skeleton, whose bones, as they declared, showed, when disinterred, the impress of the wounds which he had received. But may it not still be doubted whether Osgood and Ailric, who followed their benefactor to the fatal field, did not aid his escape [with the connivance of Editha]?"

It is a question to dream over. But these traditions concerning Harold, like other legends which grew up in Anderida Silva, are now like the forest itself—never to be explored by us. They remain as stories, they touch the imagination; while the forest is recalled by glades of trees and by wooded parks, like Arundel, Plate 57. You have already seen, in the picture of Chanctonbury Downs, Plate 9, and in that of the Georgian Windmill, near Worthing, Plate 10, some typical views of a delightful country which for long ages formed part of the forest range. As a contrast to these brilliant sketches there is Plate 12, representing in a masterly manner an ancient breakwater and a rough tide on the Sussex Coast, at Brighton, in a neighbourhood now well known for its Downs, but long palisaded by the forest of Anderida.

In the picture of Chanctonbury, as in Plate 10, the Windmill, Mr. Orrock has drawn attention to the real historic use and value of the Downs of England, namely, as a pasturage for sheep; and by

LINCOLNSHIRE COAST

so doing, he suggests quite as much social history as may be found in most schoolbooks on the lives of our English kings. The reign of the sheepfolds and shepherds is the subject of the last chapter.

Another theme is now suggested by Plate 13, a beautiful scene on the Lincolnshire coast, not far from Chapel, fresh in treatment, breezy and simple, and lively with sea-birds. The atmosphere is really that of the seaside, and the general effect will be appreciated by those who are familiar with the coast of Lincolnshire. The only point in this drawing that needs explanation is the group of figures, the donkey, the old fisherman, and the child.

In a conversation with Mr. Orrock, the old man described himself as one of "the old sort," "a regular out-and-out sea-poacher, who got fish without tiring himself too much, just as his father did, and *his* father and grandfather afore him."

He was thus a follower of fishing customs which were rapidly passing away, and which went back into the past, Heaven knows how many generations! The actual fishing was done not by the man and his grandchild, but by Ned the donkey, a trawler on four strong legs, and a great deal of pride the good beast took in his occupation. Wading in the sea, with the water above his girths, he pulled the trawling-net through the waves, solemnly, and flicking his intelligent ears all the time. The fishes caught in this way were small, and the money received from them never exceeded two-and-six-pence a day, but the old man was quite satisfied,

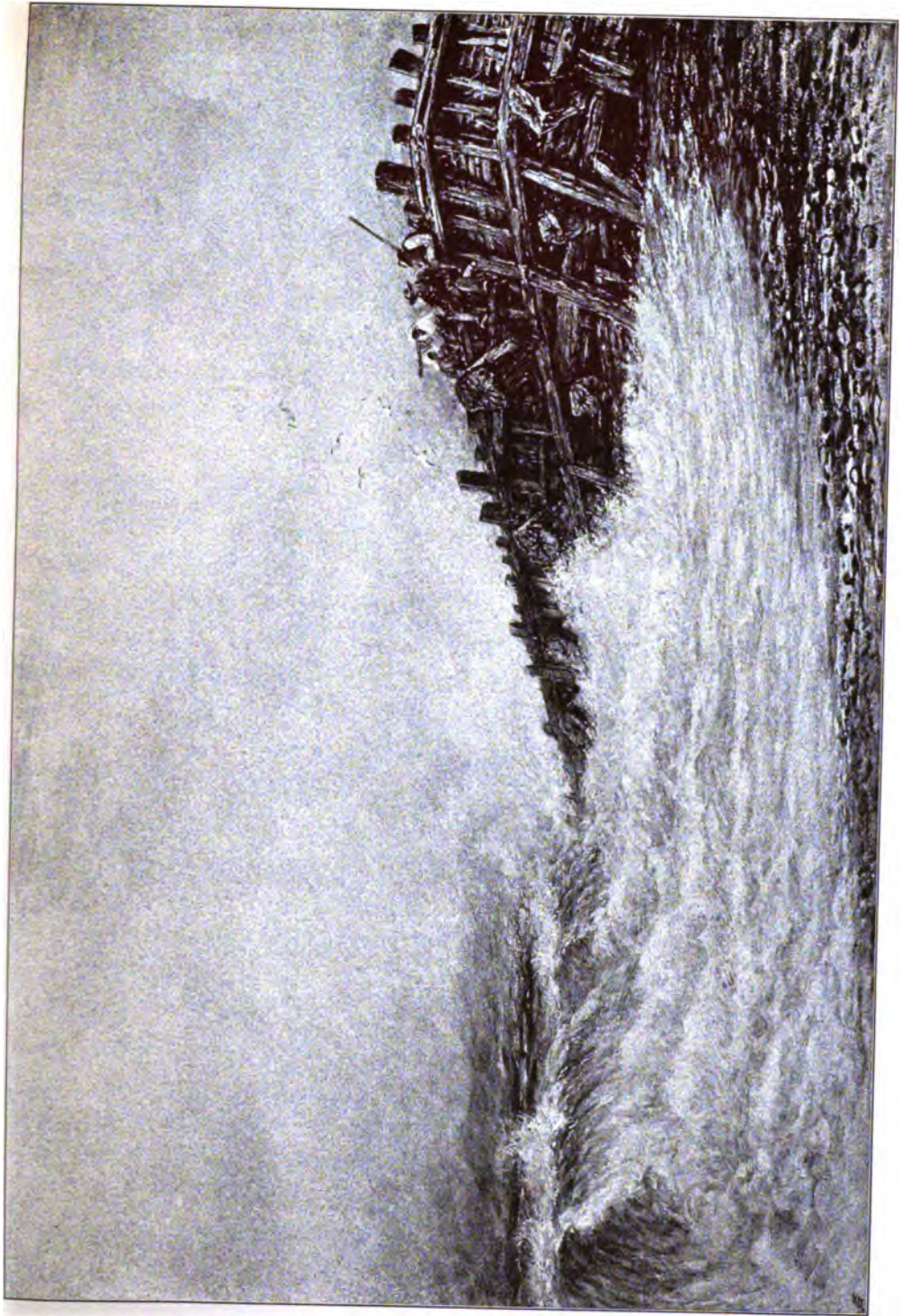
OLD ENGLAND

and passed with his grandchild and the "trawler" the happiest time imaginable. Only one thing ever stirred him into anger, and that was the great fleet of trawling boats on the horizon, catching fish to be sent *via* Grimsby to the London market. "You see, sir," he said, "you wants a big fish for your brickfast, having friends, so to speak, and you think a good spread-out will be nice and tidy, and so you sends to Lunnon for something caught over there. Fine, eh? How 'mazing sharp we are these days, to be sure! Lord, my donkey catches small uns, but they do fust rate, if you buy enough. Here am I, an old un, nigh over seventy, and all my days I've lived on fish caught by a donkey, Ned or another; and just you feel this arm of mine! Squeeze it! No skim-milk food there, eh! And do'ou say now, after that, small fishes caught by Ned ain't noorishing."

In this simple, light-hearted way, perhaps, fishing was done along our coasts in the Middle Ages, during the long centuries of Papal England, when the great majority of the people lived on salted foods for nearly six months of the year. Salt from sea brine got into all the cooking. It was vile salt as a rule, produced mainly by solar heat in the southern counties, dirty, sandy, dark in colour, and filled with many impurities. Consider this fact in connection with the total neglect of sanitary precautions in mediæval times, and imagine what the effect was on provisions. Bacon was the principal food; but salted poultry, mutton, beef, and other meats were popular. The late Thorold Rogers

PLATE XII

**OLD BREAKWATER ON THE SUSSEX COAST
AT BRIGHTON, IN A SOU'-WEST GALE**



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SALT AND HEALTH

says, in his "Six Centuries of Work and Wages," that the custom of the Church prescribed a diet of salted fish just before the coming of spring, and, as a consequence, there was a great and most important trade in salted sea-fish, the earliest maritime adventure being directed towards the discovery of new and more abundant fishing-grounds. All this salted food was very unwholesome ; its effects on the general stamina of the people were indeed deplorable, especially in the case of children. There was no supervision by the State, no inspectors ; any speculative trader could salt his fish and flesh in whatever way seemed convenient to his interests. On this Lincolnshire Coast which Mr. Orrock has drawn for us, as on every other in the Kingdom, fish were caught, salted, and then distributed through the country : and as the population was small and scattered, the cured provisions must have passed through many singular adventures when they were being hawked from place to place. There can be no doubt that mediæval ways of distributing sea-fish were all favourable to those diseases which the medical science of to-day infests with microbes and bacteria. Apart from this, as Mr. Rogers points out, "in the absence of all winter roots and herbs, beyond a few onions, a diet on salted provisions, extended over so long a period, would be sure to engender disease, even though the salt were of the best quality ; and as a matter of fact, scurvy and leprosy, the invariable results of an unwholesome diet, were endemic, the latter malignant and infectious, in mediæval England.

OLD ENGLAND

The virulence of these diseases, due, in the first instance, to unwholesome food, was aggravated by the inconceivably filthy habits of the people."

Modern science does not agree to all that Mr. Rogers tells us in this passage; but it accepts personal uncleanness, bad sanitation, and unwholesome salted fish as predisposing causes of leprosy. The origin of the leprous microbe is another thing.

Historically, then, there is no romance in a picture that sets thought astir on the subject of sea fishing in its relation to the vicissitudes of common life in England. The subject is mentioned here partly because it is suggested to students of history by all pictures of the English sea-coast, and partly because the historical sense should be stimulated by anything in English life suggestive of age and tradition. Consider, for instance, the type of fishing-boat in Mr. Orrock's portrait-sketch of Berwick-on-Tweed, Plate 14, facing page 48. It goes back by direct descent to similar fishing-boats in far distant times, and probably the type has changed not more nor less than the men who, during the many centuries, have traded in such boats over the deep seas. The fishermen and their smacks have passed together through an evolution which has worked slow changes in both, but without harming the original type. Pictures gain much when they are viewed thus, in relation to the ancestry of trades and of craftsmanship. These Berwick boats, with their picturesque mainsails, their great breadth of beam, and their sturdy elegance of line, have two

BERWICK-ON-TWEED

points of great interest. First of all, their beauty is the outcome of utility, it springs from a habit of doing work with skill for the purpose of meeting definite needs subject to well-known conditions ; and next, the character of the northern fishermen is represented also. There is no attempt at ornament in their boats. There is not a trace of that gallant fantasy of design which the Danes of the ninth century put into their victorious-looking "keels." Centuries of North-English common sense, always at war with the sea for purposes of trade, have produced the Berwick boats and the Berwick fishermen, types of endurance, and also of rugged comeliness.

Mediæval Berwick was the chief centre on the eastern coast for salmon-fishing. In the thirteenth century, and the year 1254, this town was connected with an event which Matthew Paris related in a lively manner : "In Lent of this year, some foreign vessels arrived, driven hither by the fury of the winds, notwithstanding the efforts of those in charge of them. We have not amongst us any like these ships ; they were large, and handsomely and strongly built, and well equipped with all kinds of arms, warlike stores, and provisions. They were driven on the northern coasts of England, near Berwick, and were at once seized by the coast-guard, as well as the crews of them, on the suspicion of being foreigners, or spies, or enemies of some kind perhaps. On making a strict search of the vessels, the captors found the holds of them filled with large quantities of arms, with coats of mail, helmets,

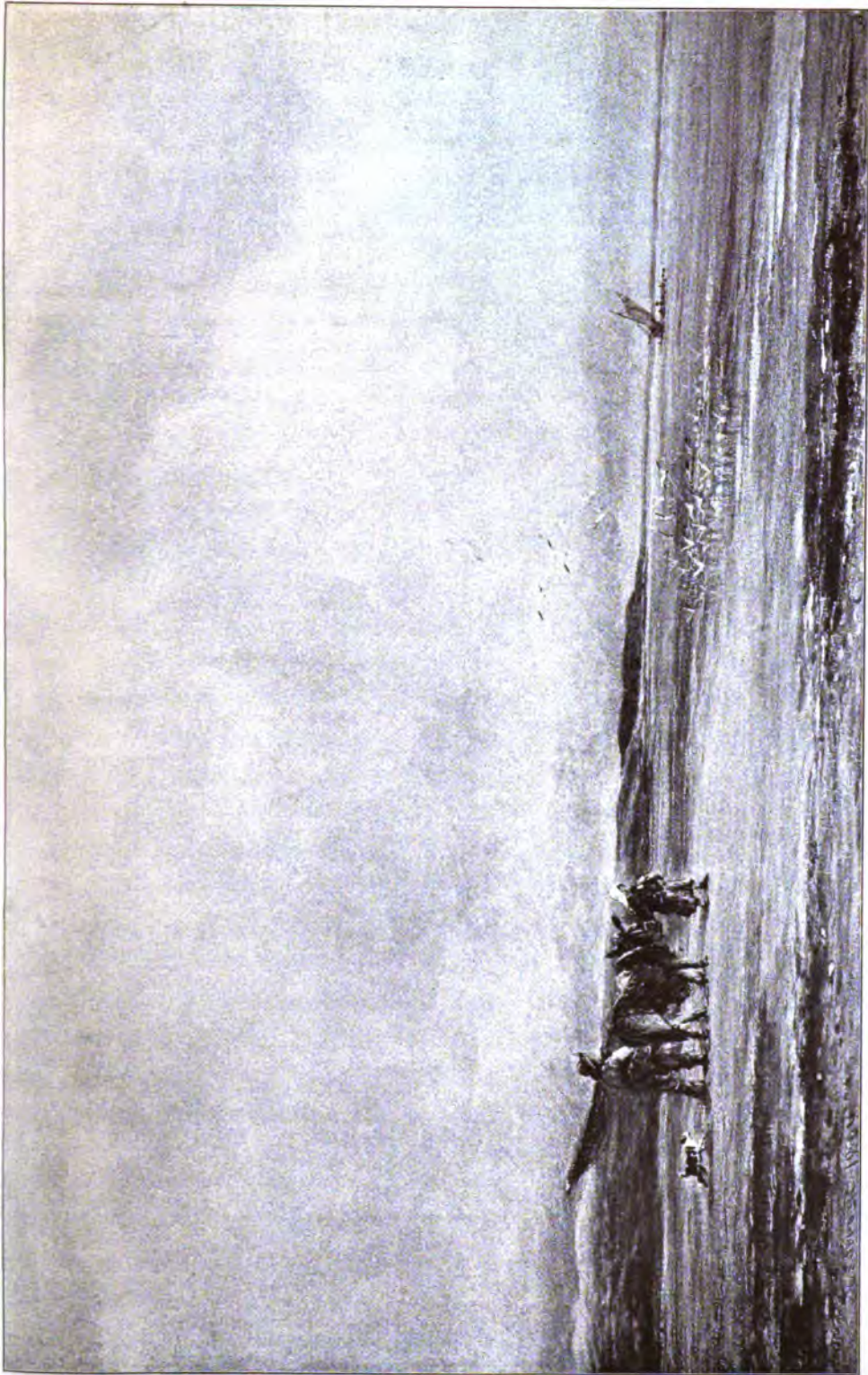
OLD ENGLAND

shields, lances, bows and arrows, cross-bows and darts, as well as provisions, sufficient for an army. On being asked, the crew would not tell the bailiffs who they were, or why or whence they came, and none of the bailiffs could understand their language. Other vessels, also, were visible at sea. When all belonging to the ships believed that they were going to be put to death, they were allowed to depart in peace, that men might not prove themselves more cruel than the tempest, and possibly, for fear of vengeance following any harm done to them."

The next picture, Bamborough Castle, Plate 15, is similar in kind both to the Dunstanborough Castle, Plate 8, and to the quite majestic Holy Island, Plate 16. All these are excellent impressions of mediæval strongholds on the wild sea-coasts. Mr. Orrock paints rough water with a rare skill, and gives to each sea-picture a distinctive character which is locally true and definite. The castles also, in these drawings, are put in with the right sympathy of touch. We can never have too great an admiration for the excellence of mediæval masonry and design, but admiration is easier when the work stands domineeringly at the sea's edge, on a storm-beaten coast, in a situation of bleak loneliness and grandeur.

You may be certain that such perfect masonry could not have been put together under a system of a long hours' day; and modern research has shown that the old English working day was one of eight hours. Listen to Thorold Rogers on this point. He is firmly of opinion that the day was one

PLATE XIII
ON THE LINCOLNSHIRE COAST NEAR
CHAPEL



MEDIÆVAL WORKING DAY

of eight hours' work, and he grounds his belief on the fact that winter wages were reckoned to be payable only in the months of December and January, and from the fact that extra hours, sometimes as many as forty-eight in the week, are frequently paid for by the King's agents when hurried work was needed. "These hours, of course, were not continuous, being broken by nonschenes, dinner, and supper in the summer, and for nonschenes and dinner in the shorter days. During the winter solstice it seems that only the dinner-time was allowed. Even when the Act of Elizabeth and the regulations of the quarter sessions prescribed a day of twelve hours all the year round, . . . two hours and a half were allowed for rest, and the day was brought down, on an average, to nine hours and a half. But this was precisely one of those prescriptions which labourers would be sure to resist and employers would find it expedient not to insist on. That it was evaded is, I think, clear from the fact that the quarter sessions' ordinances constantly call attention to the law, and remind artisans of the penalties they incurred—a penny for every hour of absence. Employers were very likely to discover that the labourers' resistance to an exceedingly long day was not entirely personal, and that the work might suffer from the workman's weariness or exhaustion."

At a single reading you may not take all that in, but if you read it twice, and connect it with the architectural work illustrated in this book, you will find it a full and satisfactory account of certain conditions

OLD ENGLAND

of labour which were particularly favourable to the masons who built our English cathedrals, village churches, old country houses, and such castles as those at Bamborough and Holy Island.

Of course, short hours and fresh energies were not sufficient by themselves. Excellent craft traditions, tried and tested by many generations of experience, were even more essential: and, happily, the mediæval craftsmen had before them as models for imitation what remained of the incomparable Roman masonry, as solid and substantial as when it was first erected. The Roman use of bricks was not at first copied, since English brickwork is not older than the beginning of the fourteenth century, Little Wenham Hall in Suffolk being probably the oldest example (A.D. 1260). Nevertheless, the Roman masonry was a permanent object-lesson in taste and in thoroughness; as such it was invaluable. Note, too, that the Roman concrete—the *signinum opus* of Vitruvius—was not superior to the hardest cements used in our ancient English buildings. These were calcareous cements, usually made up of very sharp and gritty sand, often mixed with small stones, and with just sufficient lime to hold the materials together. Thus sand and gravel mixed with lime formed the strongest cement used by English masons of the best periods. The greatest attention was given to the quick-lime. It was kept away from the air, and never mixed with water till it was required for the making of cement. When quick-lime is exposed to the air, both before and after it is mixed with water, the carbonic acid

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STORY OF A BRIDGE

gas which it contains begins to be absorbed ; and it is this absorption of gas that causes the lime to set and become hard. Quick-lime becomes slow and useless if you keep it exposed to the air.

Yet there are limits to the craft knowledge of all periods, and English masons during the Middle Ages did bad work as well as good : above all, they did not know how to build securely under the waters of tidal rivers. It would seem that they were unacquainted with the sea-worm, the destructive teredo. In any case they were frequently defeated by it. Thus the Bridge of Berwick-on-Tweed (you will see its descendants in Mr. Orrock's picture, Plate 14,) was the cause of a great many tribulations, for it fell down many times, whether built with stone or of wood. It gave way in 1199, it fell from end to end in 1294, and in both these cases the disaster was put to the discredit of an inundation, which, to be sure, merely finished the work so busily undertaken by the sea-worm. The people at Berwick lost heart, and for fifty-three years they would not rebuild their bridge, preferring a system of ferry boats with a guard of six archers or cross-bowmen, upon whom, we may be sure, the teredo had never a chance of asserting its authority. At last, in 1347, the good folk of Berwick got tired of the ferry ; lives were lost from time to time, so women cried out for some less dangerous means of crossing the river ; and the King having granted the town leave to collect a toll of sixpence on each ship that came into their harbour, a new bridge was put up, but in due course it came down again, like its

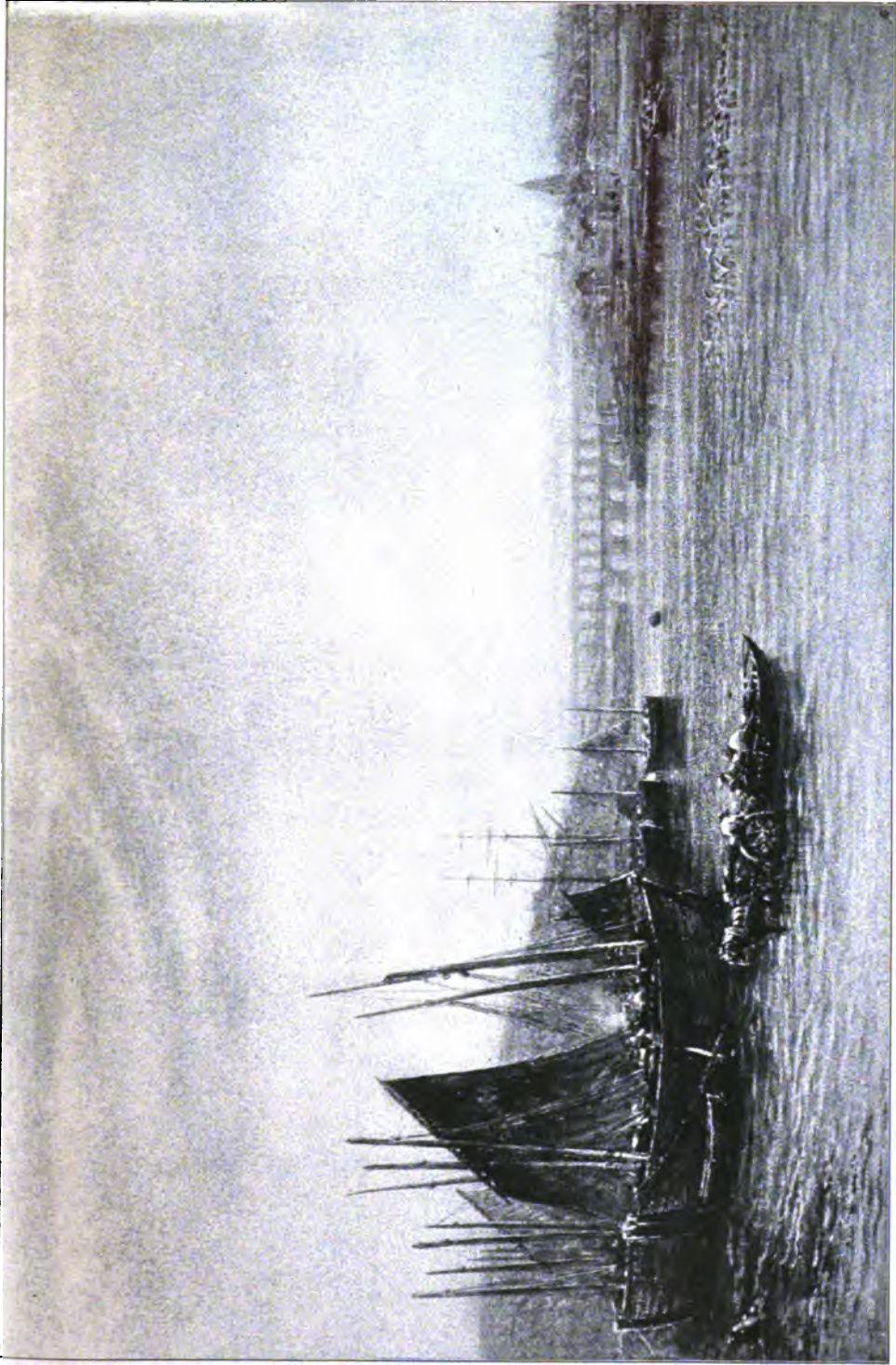
OLD ENGLAND

various ancestors. It seems to have been little better than a pack of cards when it was rebuilt once again; and many subsequent baths in the Tweed must be imagined if you wish to join the Berwick bridges in Mr. Orrock's picture to their unlucky predecessors. The custom of using the old foundations of a fallen bridge, which was common in the Middle Ages, no doubt helped the sea-worms in this long history of their triumphs. To-day, luckily, the teredo has met its master, ferro-concrete, the first idea of which was hit upon by a French gardener named Joseph Monier, who in 1888 embedded in concrete an interlaced network of iron rods or wires. Should a Berwick bridge fall again, ferro-concrete will ensure it a life as long as the town's perhaps.

Meantime, how lucky we are that the sea-air does not carry with it a microbe teredo, a destroyer of mortar, a ravager worse than Time! Dunstanborough would have gone long ago, and the brave Bamborough would not be what it is now, as fine a Norman Keep as can be found in England, neither second to Richmond, Yorkshire, nor inferior in type to the White Tower, London. This is the opinion formed by Mr. Orrock after long experience. The story of Bamborough is partly Saxon and partly Norman, its origin dating back to Ida, the "Flame-bearer," who in the fifth century, after foraging along the Tweed and its tributaries, founded the Kingdom of Bernicia; and knowing that the sea might tempt pirates to invade his kingdom, he put up a great fortress at Bamborough, on the basaltic rocks, to

PLATE XIV
BERWICK-ON-TWEED





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BAMBOROUGH CASTLE

protect him and his people from attacks by sea and land.

That Ida acted wisely was proved in 642, when the Mercians under Penda invaded Northumbria. "Bamborough," says Lingard, "was the first place that ventured to stop the destructive progress of the Mercians after the battle of Maserfield. Situated on a rock, and protected on one side by a steep ascent, on the other by the waters of the ocean, it bade defiance to their exertions. But the genius of Penda was fertile in expedients, and that which he adopted displays the ferocity of his disposition. By his order the neighbouring villages were demolished, every combustible material was collected from the ruins, and reared up against the walls, and as soon as the wind blew fiercely towards the city, fire was set to the pile. Already were the smoke and flames wafted over the heads of the trembling inhabitants, when the wind suddenly changed, and the fire spent its fury in the opposite direction. Chagrined and confounded, Penda raised the siege, and led back his army."

The castle as it is now is just as you see it in Mr. Orrock's picture. The right-hand turret was the Windmill Tower, and sixty years ago Mr. Orrock saw the windmill itself. At Bamborough, in 1356, Edward III. clapped a crown on his head as King of Scotland, and then tried to prove his fitness for the office by laying waste to the Lothians, acting in a manner so terrible that February, 1356, was known ever afterwards as "Burnt Candlemas."

Let us then recall the work of mercy that

OLD ENGLAND

Bamborough's Norman Keep began to serve in 1720, when Lord Crewe, Bishop of Durham, having purchased the castle, not only turned it into a home for those who were shipwrecked, but put up storm signals at the foot of the tower, and arranged that the Customs officers on the coast should prevent outrage and plunder when ships came ashore with the tides. Besides that, horsemen patrolled the coast during storms; and when vessels were seen drifting towards the Farne Islands, a flag was hoisted, or a light was shown in the Keep, to tell fishermen at Holy Island that their help was needed. From Bamborough no assistance could be sent, as a boat could not live in the tremendous breakers along that shore. The work of mercy, thus began in 1720, went on, and grew into many good things; an infirmary was opened, schools were set on foot, and a granary also, where the poor might buy corn at the lowest possible price. In 1894, Bamborough Castle was purchased by the late Lord Armstrong for a quarter of a million pounds, and it was fitted up as a convalescent home. Bamborough the Brave, Bamborough the Blest: here in six words we get the earlier and the later character of King Ida's fortress.

At this point, before we come to the last picture in this chapter, it is convenient to give a few sketches of English coast-scenes drawn by Matthew Paris in the thirteenth century, and the reign of Henry III. (1217-1272). Here is one under the date 1240:

“As it is the nature of the sea to vomit up on dry land the dead bodies thrown into it, about eleven
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MEDIÆVAL STORM-SCENES

whales, besides other marine monsters, were cast up on the sea-coast of England, dead, as if they had been injured in some kind of struggle—not, however, by the attacks and the skill of man. The sailors and old people, dwelling near the coast, who had seen the wonders of the deep when following their vocations in the vast waters, and trafficking to distant countries, declared that there had been an unusual battle among the fishes, beasts, and monsters of the deep, which by wounding and gnawing each other, had caused death to several; and those which had been killed had been cast ashore. One of the fishes, a monster of prodigious size, made its way into the Thames, and with difficulty passed uninjured between the pillars of the bridge; it was carried as far as a manor of the king's called Mortlake, where it was followed by a number of sailors, and at last killed, after a great deal of trouble, by innumerable blows of spears."

Here is a storm-scene in the year 1250: "In the darkness of the night the sea appeared to burn like a fire, and the billows seemed to crowd together, as though fighting with one another, in such fury that the skill of sailors could not save their sinking vessels, and large and firmly built ships were sunk and lost. Not to mention other cases, at the port of Hertbourne alone three noble ships were swallowed up by the raging billows, besides small ones and others of moderate size. At Winchelsea, a port on the eastern coast, besides the salt-houses, and the abodes of fishermen, bridges and mills were destroyed; and more than three hundred houses in

OLD ENGLAND

that village, with some churches, were thrown down by the impetuous rise of the sea."

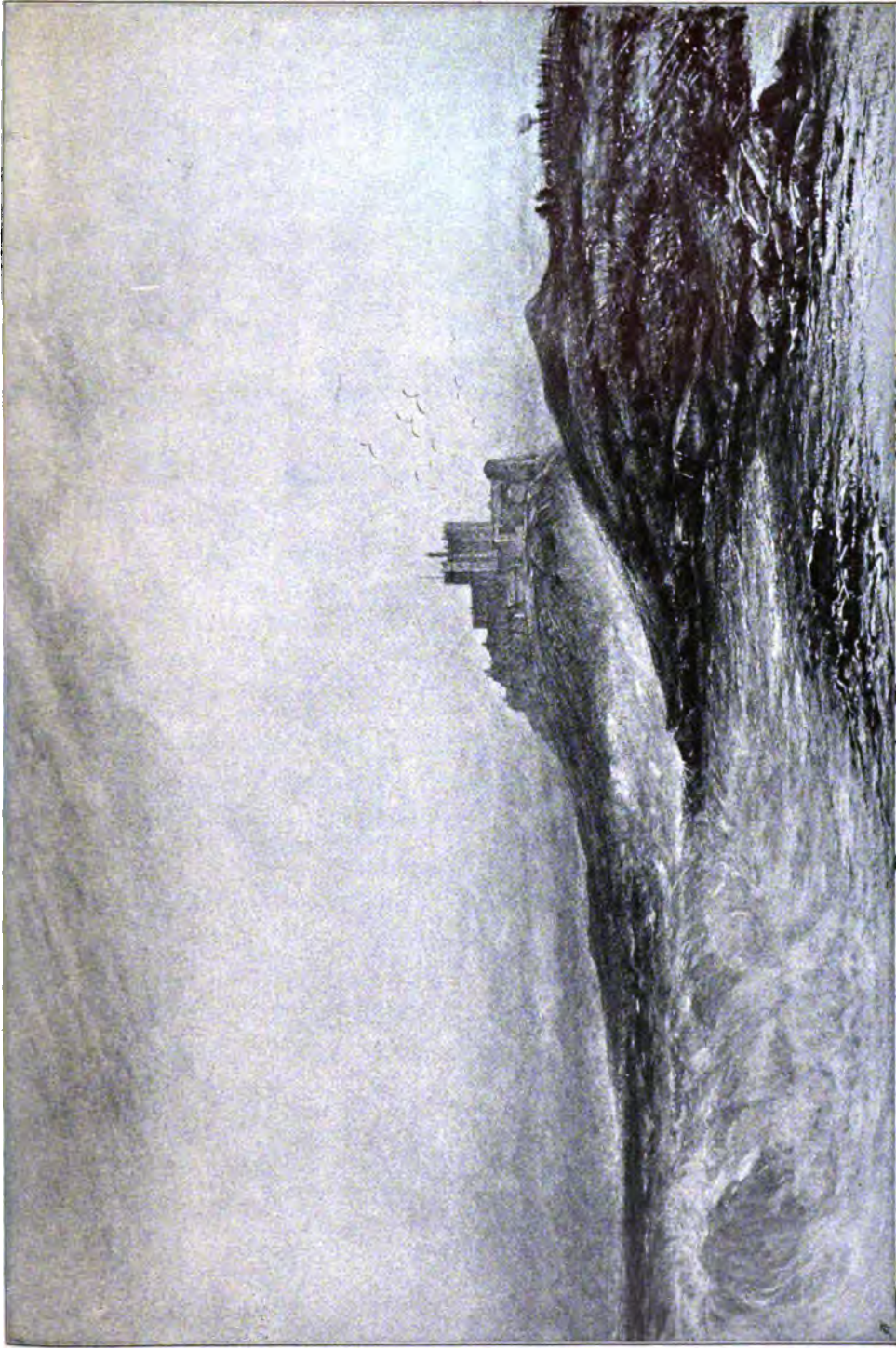
Two years later another disaster of this kind happened at Winchelsea, while in 1254 the following dramatic event occurred at the same place :

"As the Queen was now preparing to set sail for the Continent, the inhabitants of Yarmouth sent a large and handsome ship, manned with thirty skilful sailors, and well armed, to be at the service of the Prince Edward, to convey him and his attendants across the Channel in greater security. The people of Winchelsea had prepared some ships for the conveyance of the Queen, and finding that the one sent for the prince was much larger and much handsomer than theirs, they grew jealous, and treacherously and suddenly made an attack on it, destroying the ship and wounding and slaying some of the crew ; and in order to palliate their crime, they took the mast of the destroyed vessel and fitted it to the Queen's ship, as though they had acted as they did for her benefit and advantage. The Yarmouth people thereupon made heavy complaints of this proceeding, not only to Queen Eleanor and to Earl Richard, but also to all the wardens of the Cinque Ports, and with justice roused the whole kingdom to take vengeance for the offence."

Farmers on the coast suffered great losses. Thus in the year 1254 :

"At the autumnal season, when farmers usually reaped the reward of their toils, they found all the lands in the vicinity of the sea, though carefully cultivated, to be without any kind of crop, and

PLATE XV
BAMBOROUGH CASTLE,
NORTHUMBERLAND



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THE SEA-SERPENT

drenched with brine ; for, during this winter, the sea had taken possession of the shores and the lands adjacent to them ; so that no corn was visible, nor even did the woods and orchards show their leaves, or blossoms, or fruit. We may imagine the losses of others from the case of one, the Prior of Spalding, who could not boast of having gathered one single sheaf of wheat on all his land adjacent to the sea-coast. The trees, also, of the forest, as well as fruit-trees, were so dried up that they were fit only for cutting down."

In 1255 the sea-serpent seems to have been washed ashore on the Norfolk coast :

"During that same time the sea cast up in the districts belonging to the diocese of Norwich an immense sea monster ; it was disturbed by the violent commotions of the waves, and killed, as was believed, by the blows and wounds it received. This monster was larger than a whale, and was not thought to be of the whale kind : its carcase enriched the whole adjacent country."

If this be the sea-serpent, he was buried in English stomachs when Henry III. was king ; it is only its ghost that sailors see to-day in different parts of the world.

Other vivid accounts of the sea-coast in the thirteenth century are to be found in a translation of Matthew Paris by the Rev. J. A. Giles, D.C.L., published in 1852. They show very clearly the terror that storms produced in England during the Middle Ages, when, as there were no imports of food, the weather was always uppermost in the minds of all.

OLD ENGLAND

“Art Thou angered in the rivers, O Lord, or is Thy indignation in the sea?” This text from the Vulgate had a very real meaning in those days ; and Matthew Paris firmly believed with his contemporaries “that the anger of God plainly appeared to mortals in the sea as well as on land, so that the punishment of sinners appeared imminent.” Also, from time to time, the coast towns were afflicted by pirates as well as by tempests. Thus the guardians of the Cinque Ports in the year 1243 seek assistance from the Archbishop of York because they had been repulsed three times, not without great loss of men, by people from the opposite shores, chiefly those of Calais, who attacked for the sake of plunder. In their petition the guardians said that the whole of the English Navy could not withstand the enemy’s fleets. “The inhabitants of the confines of Normandy,” they said, “those who guard the more distant shores, together with the pirates of Wissant and Calais, will scarcely let us, even to a small extent, look after our fishing. Pirates also, guarding the deep sea in galleys, do not even permit travellers to return to their own country. And the King of England is now shut up in Bordeaux, as in a prison, unless by your prudence you can provide us with a large naval expedition, and plenty of money.” The Archbishop wrote immediately to the King, Henry III., imploring him to correct the errors into which he had fallen, and to quicken his return home to England.

The English navy was long the cause of great anxiety to the people, for innumerable petitions on

THE ENGLISH NAVY

this matter were prepared by the Commons at a much later date than the thirteenth century. As an example we may take one of the year 1372, addressed to Edward III. at a time when sailors were leaving their ships to follow other trades, and when vessels were being pressed in a needless manner for the King's private service. The Commons, in this emergency, spoke with warmth, reminding Edward that only "twenty years ago, and always before, the shipping of the realm was in all the ports and good towns upon the sea or rivers, so noble and plenteous that all the countries held and called our said sovereign, the King of the Sea (*le Roi de la Mier*).” It is clear from this that Edward III. at the close of his energetic reign was slack and lethargic in naval affairs, greatly to the nation's loss and indignation.

There is not room here to add further incidents from the mediæval history of our sea-coasts, but enough has been said to enable us to realise all the perils that sailors and fishermen encountered day by day. Such a castle as the one at Bamborough, with lights twinkling in its narrow windows, brought hope and comfort to many a thousand that earned a living with their boats in the dangerous North Sea. Those great Sea Castles, Bamborough, Dunstanborough, and Holy Island, were the earliest lighthouses built by Englishmen, and as such they should be remembered.

Holy Island is a kind of Gibraltar, on the summit of which the castle stands enskied. There is not a more majestic scene on the Northumbrian

OLD ENGLAND

shores, and in Plate 16 Mr. Orrock represents it with a fine enthusiasm rare in English water-colour. The Farne Islands are seen vaguely in the distance, and the Longstone Lighthouse, where Grace Darling lived.

Lindisfarne was the first name of Holy Island. But in the seventh century, an age of desolating wars, Christianity was taken there, and in a few years the place became widely known as the shrine of three good men : Aidan, the pupil and friend of Columba ; Oswald, the sixth Bretwalda of the Northumbrian kingdoms ; and Cuthbert, the Apostle of the Lowlands. Aidan went to Lindisfarne in A.D. 634-35, and he acted there with brilliance and power, sending teachers through the eastern parts of the border, forming a settlement at Old Melrose, raising churches of wood in several places, and opening a school to train twelve English boys for future mission work among their own countrymen.

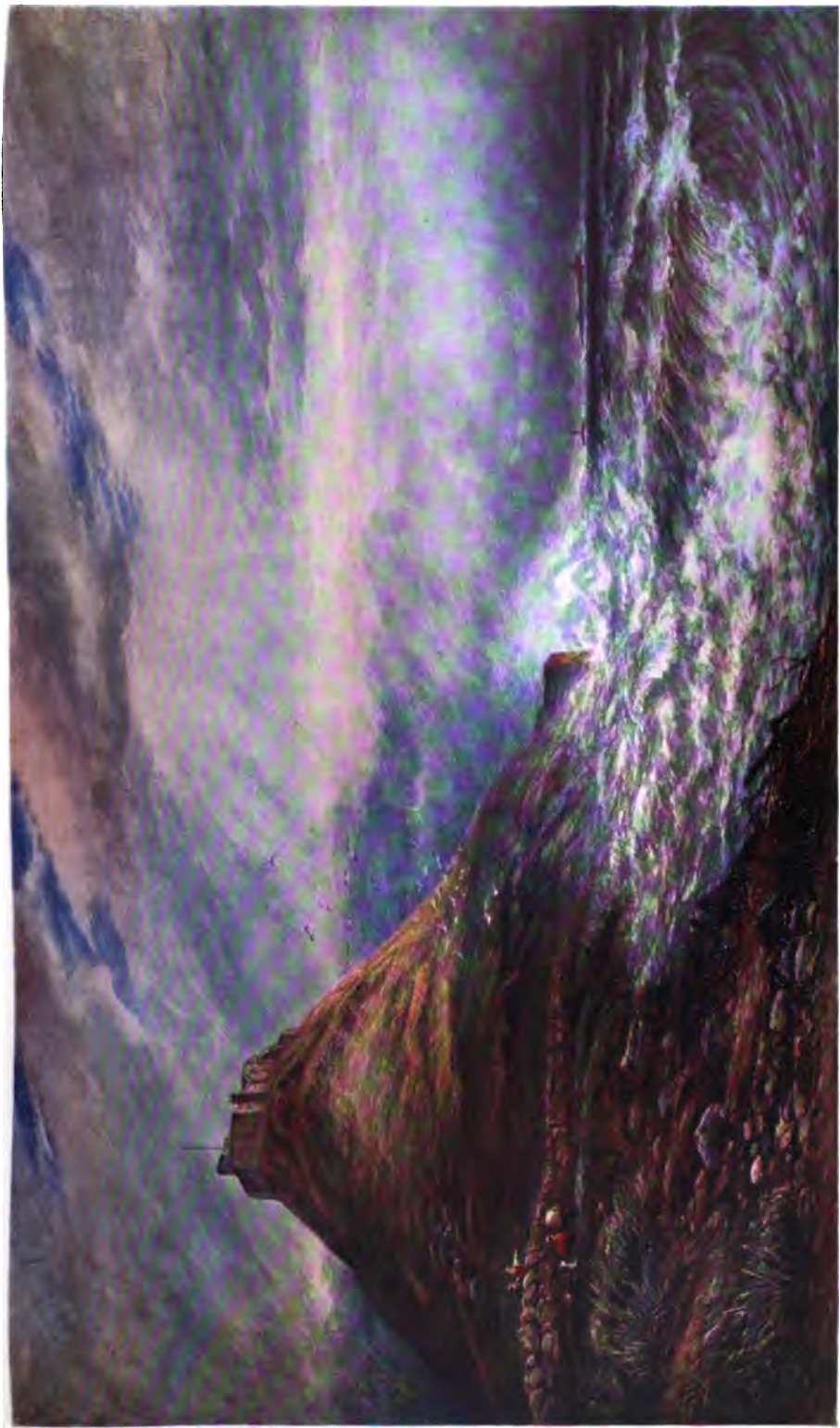
There is a passage in Bede that gives an excellent picture of Holy Island in the time of Aidan :

“On the arrival of the Bishop (Aidan) King Oswald appointed him his episcopal see in the Isle of Lindisfarne, as he desired. Which place, as the tide flows and ebbs twice a day, is enclosed by the waves of the sea like an island ; and again, twice in the day, when the shore is left dry, becomes contiguous to the land. The king also humbly and willingly in all cases giving ear to his admonitions, industriously applied himself to build and extend the Church of Christ in his kingdom ; wherein, when

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PLATE XVI
HOLY ISLAND AND ITS CASTLE,
NORTHUMBERLAND





HOLY ISLAND

the Bishop, who was not skilful in the English tongue, preached the gospel, it was most delightful to see the King himself interpreting the Word of God to his commanders and ministers, for he had perfectly learned the language of the Scots during his long banishment. From that time many of the Scots came daily into Britain, and with great devotion preached the Word to those provinces of the English over which King Oswald reigned, and those among them that had received priest's orders administered to them the grace of baptism. Churches were built in several places; the people joyfully flocked together to hear the Word; money and lands were given of the King's bounty to build monasteries; the English, great and small, were, by their Scottish masters, instructed in the rules and observance of regular discipline; for most of them that came to preach were monks" ("Eccl. Hist." bk. iii. c. 2).

It was in this way that Aidan and Oswald prepared the way for many true heroes of the Church, like Cuthbert and Eata; and it is to the splendid enthusiasm of these men that we owe the impetus which, centuries later, caused David I. to erect in the Border country four exquisitely noble abbeys, Kelso, Melrose, Jedburgh and Dryburgh, all founded between the years 1128 and 1150. But even these great sanctuaries of peace went through many baptisms of fire and blood. The story of each flames in one place, is filled with masons in another, with spoilers in a third, destruction and restoration following each other again and again, until at last



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the four glorious houses came utterly to ruin, in the Hertford invasion of 1545. Among the tragedies of Dryburgh was the burning of the Abbey in 1322. Edward II. was the barbarian who did the deed. When he marched away the monks rang a peal of thanksgivings from their church bells, so his Majesty marched back and burned the Abbey. It was no light duty to be a monk then in the Border country.

Oswald, the founder of Holy Island, was slain by Penda, king of the Mercians, in the battle of Maserfield, August 5, 642. The ferocity of Penda had no respect for the dead body of his foe, but cut the head and arms from the trunk, and placed them on high poles driven into the ground. They were taken down a year later by Oswy, Oswald's successor, and deposited, the head in the monastery of Lindisfarne, and the arms in the city of Bamborough. Forty-three years later, in 685, Cuthbert became Prior of Lindisfarne, and there he was buried in the year 687. Before his death he expressed the hope that his body might never be touched by unchristian hands. Nearly two centuries after his burial, when the Danes were ravaging Northumbria, the good monks of Holy Island remembered Cuthbert's words, and in 875 they decided to bear away the body to a place of shelter. Eardulf, Bishop of Lindisfarne, reverently opened the coffin, placed in it the skull of Oswald, and some relics of St. Aidan; then the humble and heroic monks set out on a march destined to last for seven years. For that space of time, says

ST. CUTHBERT'S BODY

Reginald of Durham, "Cuthbert was carried to and fro on the shoulders of pious men, through trackless and waterless places: when no house afforded him a hospitable roof, he remained under the covering of tents."

Among the places visited were the following neighbourhoods; Richmond (Yorkshire), Furness, Lancaster, Ripon, and Durham—all of which are typified in this book. Before reaching Durham the body of Saint Cuthbert was taken to Chester-le-Street, arriving there in 883, and for one hundred and twelve years the see of Lindisfarne was continued at that town. But the Danes came once more, so in 995 the body was carried to Ripon, and thence in 998 to Dunholme, where it remained in a little church of wands and branches till a good building—the predecessor of Durham Cathedral—was ready to receive it. In 1069 the body was taken for a year to Lindisfarne, and in 1104 it was enshrined in Durham Cathedral.

The tomb was opened in 1542 by Dr. Ley, one of the agents of Henry VIII., and the body of Saint Cuthbert was found to be whole and incorrupt. The monks were outraged by this act and hid the body, choosing a place under the shrine; but the coffin was opened again in 1826, and people gloated over Cuthbert's bones and Oswald's skull.

Such is the atmosphere of history enveloping the names of Holy Island and Saint Cuthbert. To-day the early Saints of Lindisfarne have little hold on the popular imagination; indeed they have been eclipsed by a woman's fame; and there is, no doubt,

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in the touching heroism of Grace Darling, a loveliness easier to be remembered than the far-off deeds of Oswald, Aidan, and Cuthbert. The Longstone Lighthouse, where Grace Darling lived, is one of the points of interest in Mr. Orrock's commanding picture of Holy Island.

Born at Bamborough, November 24, 1815, Grace was the daughter of William Darling, keeper of the Longstone Lighthouse on one of the dangerous Farne Islands ; and there she was brought up with her brother. On the night of September 6, 1838, when Grace was twenty-three, the steamer, "Forfarshire," in its passage from Hull to Dundee, ran against the rocks of one among the seventeen islands in the three Farne groups. When the vessel struck, her fore part was raised up on the huge crags by the impact of her speed and the force of the waves, so that she lay in a slanting position towards the sea, with the waves beating furiously over the decks. There were sixty-three persons on board. Only nine outlived that night.

At daybreak on the morning of the 7th, Grace Darling and her parents spied the wreck, and discovered the nine survivors clinging to the rocks and to the débris of the vessel. It was clear that the next tide would wash them away. In a twinkling Grace made up her mind to go instantly to their rescue. William Darling protested, the task seeming hopeless, impossible ; but when Grace threatened to go by herself, the good man gave way, and cheerfully obeyed her orders.

The boat was launched with the help of Mrs.

GRACE DARLING

Darling, and Grace, accompanied by her father, rowed out to the survivors. The sea was high, but there was a higher tide in her own affairs, which, taken at the flood, lead on to fortune—a fortune subscribed with enthusiasm by the whole nation. So many offers of marriage came that Grace was asked to multiply herself into a thousand Darlings. Spinsterhood was easier, and Grace went back happily to her old simple work in the lighthouse. Steamers came filled with heroine-worshippers; theatrical pieces were acted in her honour all over the kingdom; her portrait was taken, reproduced, and hung everywhere in cottages and great houses; but Grace—she did not care two straws. It left her unaffected, humble, quiet, devoted to her parents, full of gentleness and charity. Name and nature alike made her what she was—Grace Darling, the noblest type of the Northern Englishwoman. This she was in character, but not in health. A few years after the undying act of heroism, Grace died of consumption, on October 20, 1842. By the sea near Holy Island there she sleeps, one of the saints of England's story. And Grace and Lindisfarne are worthy of each other.

In this chapter we have travelled from Cæsar's coming to the wreck of the "Forfarshire," September, 1838; and we have passed by the way many sea-borne conquerors, the Saxons, the Angles, the Danes, and the Normans. "Lest we forget" is the lesson that we learn here. There is a note of menace, a sound of warning, in the boom

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of the changing tides along our coasts. There are times when to feel secure is to be unsafe. The great old monasteries, the ancient feudal castles, proud, strong, and prosperous, were secure in *their* time ; and acting as though their strength would endure for ever, they took liberties with Providence. To-day they are memories, ruins, yet imperishable as alarm signals to the self-confidence of our easy-going race :

“ Dead and gone is the old world's ideal,
The old arts and old religions fled ;
But I gladly live amid the real,
And I seek a worthier ideal—
Courage, brothers—God is overhead ! ”

CHAPTER II

THE INFLUENCE OF ROADS AND BRIDGES

IF you were asked to state the change in the life of Britain brought about by the Romans, what would you say concerning the influence of roads and bridges? How would you suggest the essential difference between the Britain of Cæsar's time and Britain in the third and fourth centuries?

It was clearly a difference distinguishing a low form of life from a much higher form; and it had much in common with the difference that exists between the blood stream in primitive organisms and the perfect arterial system in man. This analogy is helpful; for roads and bridges are to a nation what the arterial system is to the human body, namely, the conduits of strength, energy, life, genius; they make development a natural process, half-automatic in action; and when they decay and perish a nation suffers paralysis, locally or entirely. But, as human nature renews herself always, so in the arterial system of a country, the roads and bridges may be restored into permanency. During the Middle Ages in England this matter was so well understood that the maintenance of bridges and roads was held up before the people as a pious

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office, a duty of a religious nature ; and to bring this home to the popular mind, the clergy granted remissions of penance in the case of those (and they were many) who asked in this matter for practical encouragement. By this and other means the arterial system of mediæval England was kept more or less in working order, though some parts of it were always in need of repair. The system was never whole and perfect. Yet it was wonderful in comparison with the primitive movement of life in Cæsar's Britain, where the lanes and foot-tracks, while supporting that life, did not allow any real progress. Man was then unable to go up the long spiral of evolution. Till the Romans came to labour and to stay, Britain was in pretty much the same condition as the frogs and fish in her pools and marshes : for although her children brought forth small copies of themselves, her history and theirs was one of arrested development. What the country needed was the system of highways that the Romans cut through her immense woods and desolate fens.

That the work was stupendously difficult, that an enormous stress and strain accompanied the cutting of roads through primeval forests, fens, and wastes, is proved by nothing so much as by the fact that the Romans spent themselves on this one duty, leaving behind them in Britain no public monument of masonry equal to those which they built elsewhere, in France and in Spain. Roman stonework of surprising value has come down to us, but it cannot be compared with such an example of mighty

PLATE XVII

BRIDGE, POSSIBLY OF ROMAN
DESCENT, NEAR ELSTEAD IN SURREY





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ROMAN BRIDGES

craftsmanship as the splendid aqueduct of the Pont du Gard, near Nîmes, in France, with its three graceful tiers of arches, all in bold, rude, impressive masonry. This bridge and aqueduct combined was very famous in ancient days. Writers said of it that the stones, some of which measured twenty feet in length, were joined together by bands or ligaments of iron; the first row of arches was estimated as 438 feet long, the second as 746 feet, and the last and highest, as 268 yards and one foot. This vast structure crossed a valley at about 182 feet above the river Gardon.

In Spain there are two grand types of Roman bridge. At Cordova the great length and the many arches strike the imagination by their massive proportion; while at Toledo may be seen the romance of bridge-building by the Romans, in the sweep of single arches spanning the valley of the Tagus. As to France, near the city of Brioude, in Auvergne, thrown across the river Allier or Elaver, the Romans built the largest of their single-arched bridges. On two rocks separated from each other by a distance of sixty-five yards the masons built two mighty pillars, and spanned the chasm between by an arch lifted up about eighty-four feet above the water. But the most magnificent bridge of all was made by Trajan over the Danube, and from the description we have of it the world has never seen a finer. It was a mile long, raised 150 feet from the foundations and carried over the river on 20 piers of hewn stone, 170 feet from one another, and the breadth of roadway seems to have been 60 feet. Trajan the

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but the general character of the original type may be arrived at by conjecture.

The Romans seem to have completed a good many of their bridges by placing timber on stone piers and arches. At Ebchester, for instance, there is—or was in the middle of the last century—a bridge of Roman origin made of wood upon stone piers; and in Longstaffe's History of Darlington, published in 1854, two other examples are mentioned. Over a beck or burn near Streatlam, on the presumed course of a Roman road, there existed in Longstaffe's day some black oaken timbers; while at Piercebridge was one of the stakes which helped to support the crossing of a Roman highway. The survival of this wood through so many centuries may mean that the original Roman work was partly of timber, and that the type was respected in all subsequent restorations. The Romans would be certain to find use for all the trees which they cut down during the making of a road; and I dwell upon these points because the woodwork in Plate 18 may be Roman by tradition.

In these spirited and valuable pictures by Mr. Orrock, the bridges lead on to Surrey cottages, and are thus associated to-day, as in each succeeding generation, with a phase of life which the Romans saw themselves when houses began to spring up near to their bridges, and along their friendly roads. We dare not say that these bridges are Roman at the present time; it is better to describe them as being of Roman descent, for bridges passed through so many changes during the Middle Ages

PLATE XVIII
BRIDGE, POSSIBLY OF ROMAN DESCENT, .
NEAR MILFORD IN SURREY





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ANCIENT BRIDGES

that only a few were unaffected. Often a new bridge was built both on and around the remains of an old one. Some part of the old bridge was usually retained. A very curious example of this custom is quoted by M. J. J. Jusserand in his brilliant work on "English Wayfaring Life in the Middle Ages." In 1815, when a bridge was rebuilt over the Teign, between Newton Abbot and Teignmouth, it was found that no fewer than four successive bridges had been put up at various times with or over the remnants of previous structures. Mr. P. T. Taylor, after examining the matter on the spot, said he believed that the last or upper work was done in the sixteenth century, and that the work under it, a red bridge, was built on the salt-marsh in the thirteenth century, since which time the soil had accumulated to the depth of ten feet. After this red bridge came a wooden one, which Taylor believed to be as old as the Norman Conquest; and then there was a white stone bridge, which Taylor regarded as of Roman workmanship. Here we have a probable Roman bridge confined, as it were, in three other structures; and with this example in mind we cannot be too careful when we attempt to estimate the age of any old bridge in England.

Another point to be remembered is this: the bridges of Roman descent in England are very simple in their structural design, yet they mark a great stride of progress in this form of engineering architecture. The earliest Roman bridges were of wood, like the Pons Sublicius, at the foot of Mount

OLD ENGLAND

Aventine. The word *sublicius*, from *sublicæ* (stakes), will give you an idea of the timber-work. This bridge, about B.C. 46, was taken down by Æmilius Lepidus, and a stone one was built on the same place. It was the introduction of the arch, probably borrowed by the Romans from the Etruscans, that gave rise to all the best improvements in the structure of bridges; and the arch was a prime characteristic of Roman taste during the greatest periods of Roman architecture, from the first to the fourth century A.D. The Byzantines, following the Romans, recognised its value, and in course of time the Roman arch found its way to the great builders of the Middle Ages, who made use of it for those wondrous Gothic cathedrals which still throw up towards heaven their rich harmonies of orchestral stone, petrified music, as Goethe said. The arch returned to England both with the Saxons and with the Normans, so in this matter, as in many others, all roads lead to Rome.

As an introduction to the subject of our Roman roads, let us see what the Romans themselves said about their art of making highways, because the methods and customs followed in their own country must have been repeated in Britain, though modified to suit different conditions, climatic and geographical.

The principal Italian roads were named after the builder, or from the places to which they led; they were mostly of a strategic or military kind, though there were cross-ways and private roads also, used by the rich for their estates or by landowners for

ROMAN ROADS

farming purposes. The public ways were put under the care of men very high in rank. Augustus himself was the guardian of the roads belonging to his capital, and his deputies, who kept the paving in good condition, were two prætorians, with two lictors each as helpers. The *diverticula*, or cross-ways, seem to have been pretty and attractive. The word *diverticula* appears to have been used also for the inns along the lesser thoroughfares, while *tabernæ diversoriæ* meant the resting-places for travellers on or near the great roads. At a later time the stages and taverns became known as *mansiones*, and were placed at about half-a-day's journey from each other, with stations for relays between, where the public couriers (introduced by Augustus) refreshed themselves, changed horses, and started again on their mission, thinking of the popular maxim: "Nature has granted us an inn for our sojourning, not a home for our dwelling."

These couriers were agents of the State, political messengers, carriers of public despatches, and as they rode along the highways they passed the private burial-grounds of their country, placed near to the roads in gardens and fields, to keep travellers in mind of the shortness of human life. All this—the inns, the despatch-bearers, the resting-places for wayfarers, and the graves not far from the roadside—all this routine of daily custom and work doubtless came to Britain with the Romans, like the Roman baths, markets, halls of justice, temples, and dress and language.

The Roman roads were straight, going from point

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to point with an arrow-like directness, sometimes passing through a hill, as between Puteoli and Naples, and sometimes carried over the widest and swiftest rivers, as we have already seen. They were solidly paved in the Carthaginian manner, were banked up so as to give a view of the surrounding country, and on either side there was generally a raised footpath of large stones. Further, along the great military ways, starting from the gates of Rome, and repeated to the furthest limits of the Empire, there were stones that marked the mile distances; while other stones were put as seats for tired wayfarers, and as places where riders could mount their horses.

The paving of the Roman roads dated back to the time of Appius Claudius, B.C. 441, when a highway was made to Capua, to be continued, a century later, to Brundisium. In this case the paving was of flint. When stone flags were employed they varied in size from one to five feet every way, dovetailed so closely together that the surface was one solid slab of excellent mosaic, level throughout. There were at least two strata below, the first being of rough stone cemented with mortar, and the second of gravel. These strata are said to have made a foundation about three feet thick.

Mr. H. M. Scarth, in his "Roman Britain," describes a portion of the Roman road at Radstock, about ten miles south-west of Bath, which was opened in February, 1881. It was a part of the Old Fosse-Way, which ran from Cornwall to Lincoln, intersecting the Watling Street at High

PLATE XIX

OLD KEGWORTH BRIDGE ON THE
BORDERS OF LEICESTERSHIRE AND
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE



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THE FOSSE-WAY

Cross, between Coventry and Leicester. The composition of this road, detailed by Mr. Scarth, was very interesting. Fine earth, hard beaten in, formed the first foundation, or *pavimentum*; then came the bed of the road, the *statumen*, made of large stones, sometimes mixed with cement; after this the *ruderatio*, a stratum of little stones bound together by mortar; and then came the *nucleus*, a mixture either of gravel, sand, lime and clay, or of lime, chalk, and pounded tiles or bricks. Upon this heroic foundation the *summum dorsum*, or surface of the paved road, was laboriously put together. M. Jusserand, in "English Wayfaring Life in the Middle Ages," says that all Roman roads were not built with so much care and in such an enduring fashion. Of this there can be no doubt. The Romans, pre-eminently rational, did not waste time and material on the lesser public ways; but the perfection of their great military highroads may be understood if we call to mind the rebellion of the Icenii under Boadicea, in A.D. 61. When Paulinus heard of the destruction of Camolodunum, Londinium, and Verulamium, he was either in Anglesey slaying the Druids, or on his way back from that distant expedition. The road from Chester joined the Watling Street near Shrewsbury, at Wroxeter, and along this great highway Paulinus marched south into the flame of the rebellion, and with his 10,000 men slew 80,000 Britons, a number probably exaggerated. His rapid march proves beyond all question that the road was well guarded and in perfect condition.

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There has been much controversy over the British Roman roads, but we may be sure that many a road is of Roman origin which is not looked upon to-day as such. When an English highway has no ascertainable history—when its origin is not mentioned in the records and traditions of any town along its course, or in any books and MSS.—I think we may conclude that the descent of it is Roman. There have been disputes even over the great strategic ways, into which there is not room to enter here, but I may refer you to J. Horsley's "Britannia Romana" (London, 1732), H. M. Scarth's "Roman Britain" (London, 1883), and Guest's "The Four Roman Roads" (*Archæological Journal*, vol. xiv., p. 99). The four greatest roads were the Watling Street from London north to Wroxeter by way of Saint Albans, Fenny Stratford, Northampton and Tamworth; the Icknield Street, probably from Southampton by Salisbury to Bury Saint Edmunds; the Ermine Street, from London to Colchester, thence by Cambridge to Lincoln, with a continuation to the Humber; and the Fosse-Way, from Cornwall to Lincoln, by Bath, Cirencester and Leicester, passing over the Watling Street at High Cross. It is said that the Ermine Street was not of Roman origin south of Huntingdon, and that the Icknield Street may have been at first a British track.

The Via Devana was another important strategic way, running from Camolodunum (Colchester) to Deva-Colonia (Chester). It entered Leicestershire near Brighthurst, whence it passed to Medbourn,

ROMAN ROADS

continuing almost in a straight line to Leicester between the villages of Great and Little Stretton. At the beginning of the nineteenth century the Via Devana was seen in many places considerably raised above the surface of the land. It joined the Fosse-Way near the south side of Leicester, and again left it on the north, where it branched off north-west, running on by Grooby and Ashby-de-la-Zouch to Burton, and thence across Staffordshire on the way to Chester.

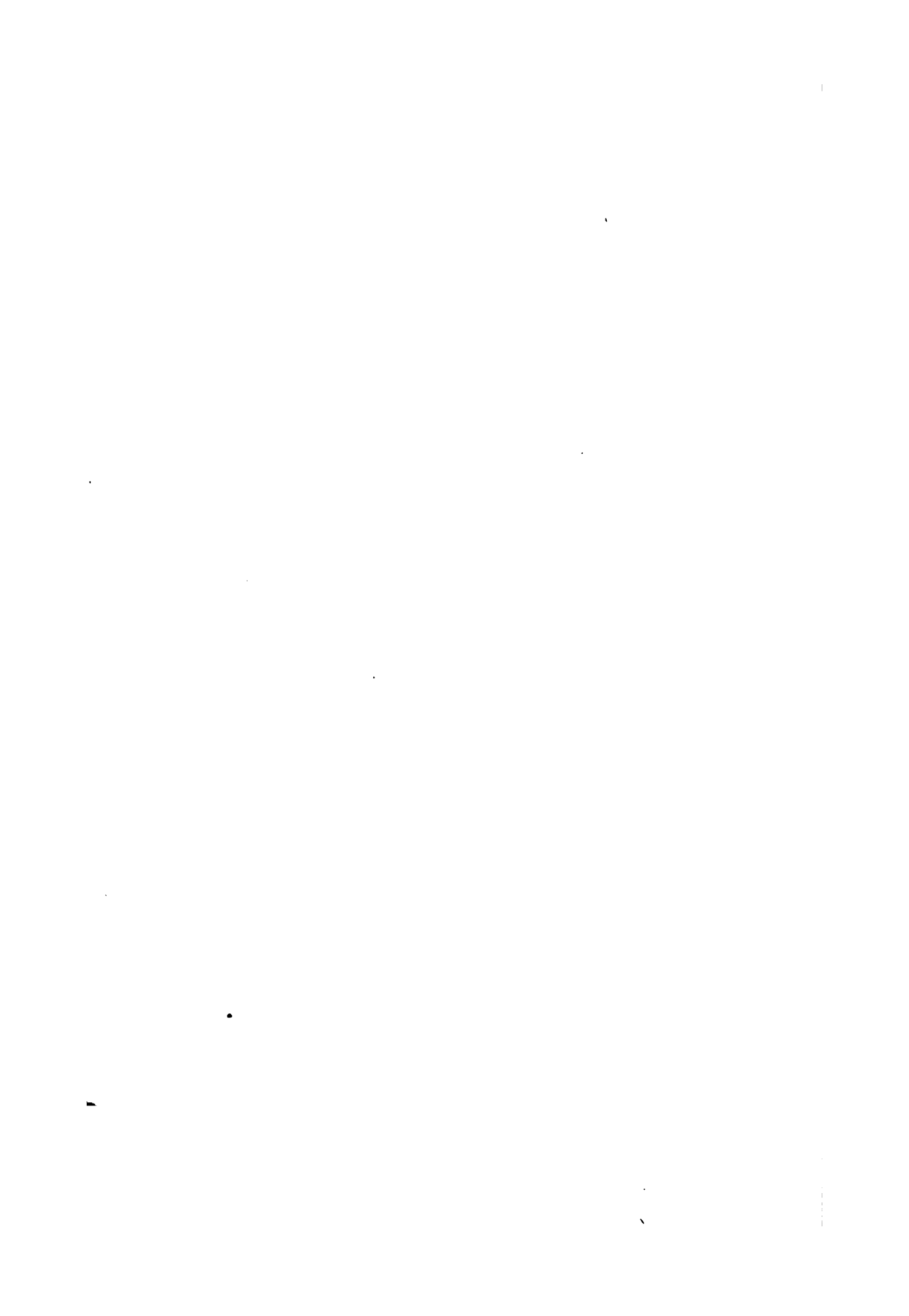
In the years 1788 and 1789, two Englishmen travelled along the Fosse-Way from Ludford to Lincoln, and thence into Devonshire. These travellers were Dr. Bennet, Bishop of Cloyne, and the Rev. T. Leman, a good writer on Roman roads and stations. Mr. Leman's account of his journey is too long to give here, but there are some points in it of particular interest. One feels sure, for instance, that the aim which the Romans set before themselves in the Midlands was to cut up the vast forests into districts. For this purpose they used the Watling Street, the Via Devana, the Fosse-Way, and other roads, one of which intersected the Fosse-Way at Segs Hill, coming from Paunton on the Ermine Street, and pointing towards Barrow-on-Soar. "If continued in the same bearing across Leicestershire," says Mr. Leman, "it would have passed the Via Devana north of Markfield, and fallen into the Watling Street near Etocetum, or Wall, in Staffordshire."

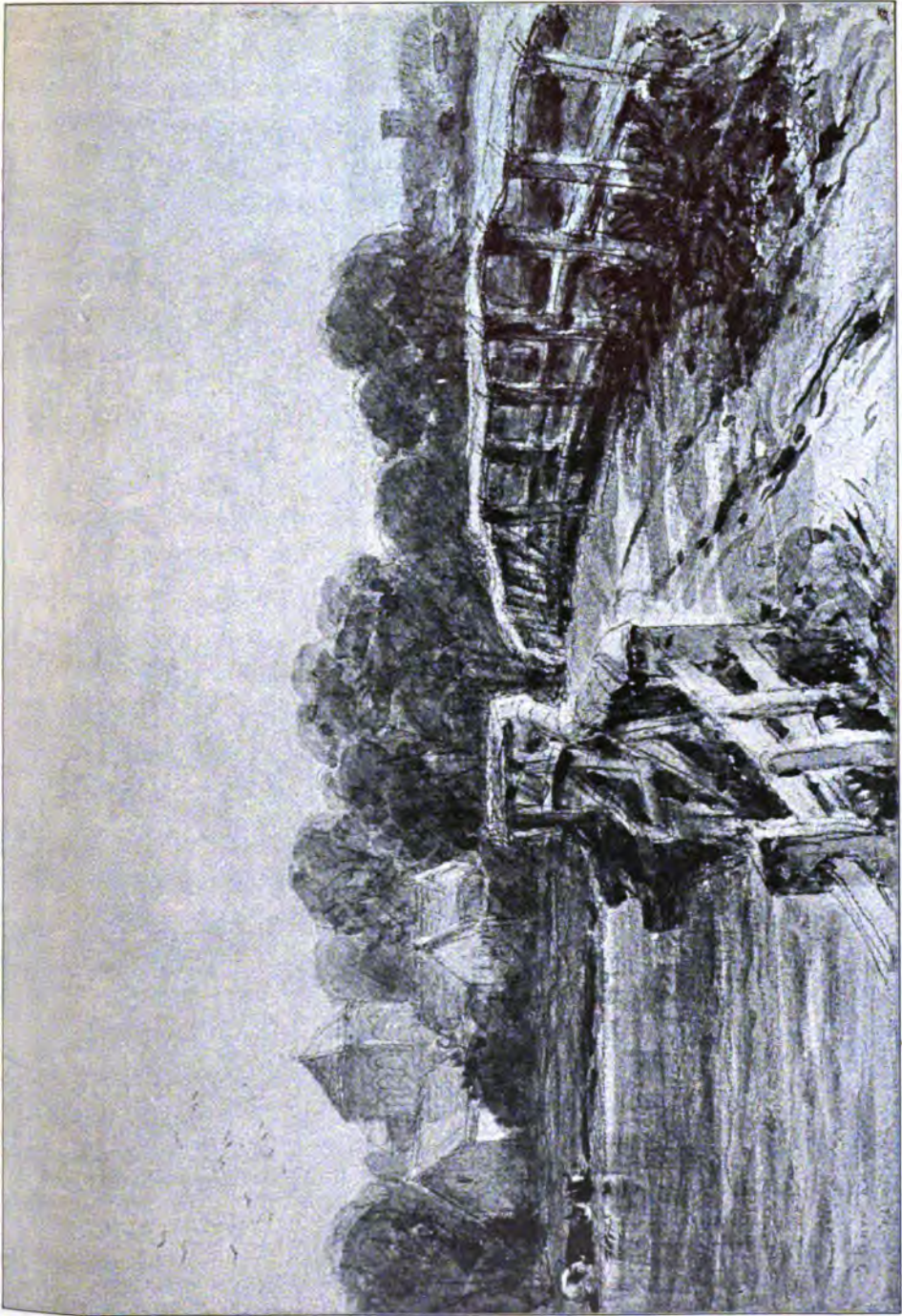
Again, "near Croft, the farmers were breaking up in many places the ridge of the Fosse-Way, by

OLD ENGLAND

carrying out their manure ; and it was impossible not to observe parts of the stone, with which it had been paved, lying about on every side." Such was the neglect of the eighteenth century. The General Turnpike Act of 1773 was very necessary. But the real point to be kept in mind is the fact that the system of paved roads in Britain enabled the Romans to do whatever they wished to achieve. North of the Humber there were highways and by-ways to connect all their camps in and near the Border Country and the defensive works of Hadrian and Agricola ; while south of the Humber the main purpose of the arteries was to unite the great heart of all trade and traffic, Londinium, with all the principal numbers of the system of camps, from those on the sea-coast (like Richborough in Kent, and Anderia in Sussex) to those on the border of North Wales (like Chester and Wroxeter). In this connection it is useful to remember a descriptive phrase in Mommsen's "History of Rome," where reference is made to *the network of roads* in Roman Britain. With that phrase in mind we cannot misunderstand the purpose served by the arterial ways which the legionaries cut through the body of England. Through these, the life of the country flowed tumultuously into the Middle Ages, bearing with it kings and their huge retinues, warriors and their attendants, great armies in battle order, peasants and parish priests, hermits, bishops, abbots and monks, humble wayfarers of a thousand kinds, pilgrims innumerable, the halt, the maimed, the blind and the leprous, hunting parties and hawking

PLATE XX
OLD SHOREHAM BRIDGE AND CHURCH
IN SUSSEX





KEGWORTH BRIDGE

parties, the pageants of chivalry, festivals and funerals, and all the other events and persons that history paints in dim colours on the far-flung Tapestries of Time.

Before we reach the heart of the Middle Ages, about the middle of the fourteenth century, we must stop for a moment, because two illustrations claim attention. Plate 19 represents a bridge which may have had a Roman origin. It is Old Kegworth Bridge, on the border of Leicestershire and Nottingham, a part of the country which was greatly affected by the Roman highways and byways. The bridge in Mr. Orrock's drawing belongs in character to the early part of the fourteenth century, but I know not how many times it has been repaired. Kegworth, long known as Cogeworde, has a modern history that goes back to the year 1289, when Edward I. granted to Robert de Hausted and Margery his wife the privilege of a market on Tuesdays, and two fairs annually. It was a tiny village in those days, but the parish had two thousand acres of land. As late as the year 1564, only sixty-eight families lived at Kegworth. Eleven years later, by a decree from Queen Elizabeth, a free school was established there. In 1800 the village had 262 houses and 1360 inhabitants. The growth of English villages was very slow. The whole population of Leicestershire did not exceed thirty-four thousand at the end of the eleventh century. Even in 1801 it was only 130,080.

Plate 20 is a very interesting sketch of Old Shoreham Bridge and Church, Sussex. The church

OLD ENGLAND

will be remembered as one of a few good relics we have (altered, of course) of a Saxon parish church, while the bridge, admirably picturesque at the time Mr. Orrock sketched it, has probably a descent as old as the church itself; though none can say how often its timbers have been broken down, patched up, renewed and transformed. Thus, in the sixth year of Edward II., Old Shoreham Bridge was the cause of much disturbance, which came about in the following manner. We have already seen that in mediæval times the restoration of roads and bridges was held up before the people as a work of piety; but the faithful did not always wish to do their duty in this matter. Juries had then not only to sit on cases of public interest, but to fix blame on the right persons, who, of course, never believed themselves to be wrong; and when a decision had been arrived at, the law was put into force by the bailiff or by the sheriff. The duty of keeping the public thoroughfares in order fell to the lot of all landowners whose property was benefited by neighbouring roads and bridges; but landowners handed on their obligation to tenants, a transference of duty which led to many troublesome disputes, because tenants, then as now, liked to be indefinite over questions of repair. This happened in the case of Old Shoreham Bridge. The property belonged to the Archbishop of Canterbury, and when a part of the bridge fell down in 1313 (a very unlucky sequence of figures), the burden of restoration had to be put on the right shoulders; and the law having decided that the

OLD SHOREHAM BRIDGE

tenants were responsible, the bailiff issued an order, and a certain tenant, Hamo de Morston by name, had one of his horses taken for the benefit of the bridge. Unlucky Hamo! Little did he think that his cries of indignation would sound for ever in English history, and be funnier in 1908 than they were in the year double thirteen! The officials who took the horse, good Simon Porter and two others, seem to have been anything rather than amused. Hamo appealed against their conduct; and they were cited to justify themselves. By rare good fortune, perhaps (for the mediæval law was peculiar), their action was confirmed. What the other tenants paid towards the bridge I do not know. Perhaps they were quiet persons, with no taste for litigation, and without poor Hamo's far-journeying voice. M. Jusserand proves that even a holy monk, the Abbot of Coggeshall, "refused to execute any repairs to a bridge near his lands under pretext that within memory of man there had been no other bridge over the river 'than a certain plank of board,' and that at all times it had been found sufficient for horsemen and pedestrians (1 Edward II.)." In disputes of this kind appeal could be made to the King; and other delays could be trumped up in the working of mediæval law.

The Abbot of Coggeshall, like Hamo de Morston, squabbled in the fourteenth century; and belonging to the same warlike period we have in our illustrations three bridges, the Warkworth, the Richmond (Yorkshire), and the ever-famous Twisel. They are typical of fourteenth-century work, and Mr. Orrock

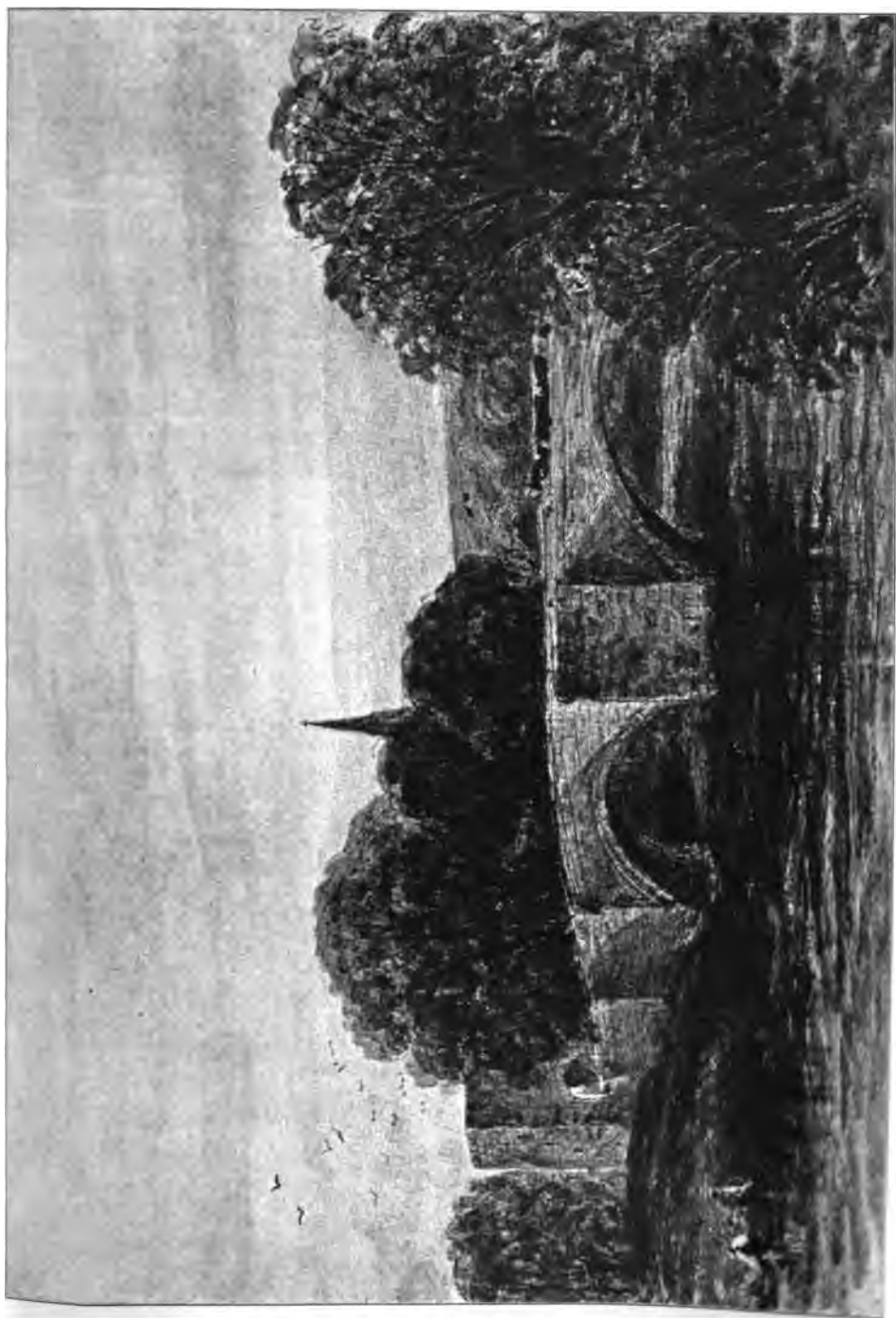
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has sketched them with admirable energy and truth. It will be well to consider these pictures one by one, beginning with Warkworth Bridge, Plate 21. Note the ribbed masonry inside the arches, and the triangular recesses built into the piers for wayfarers on foot. The ribbed work is a characteristic of fourteenth-century bridges, while the shelter places in the piers may be traced back at least as far as the Valentré Bridge at Cahors, built by the Bridge Friars of France in the thirteenth century. It is possible that Bow Bridge, endowed by Queen Matilda in the twelfth century, and destroyed in 1839, may have had from the first those triangular recesses, which certainly formed one of its points of interest at a later time. The type of the Warkworth Bridge was retained for many generations, for I find it repeated in the Wilton Bridge across the Wye, near Ross, a beautiful structure of reddish sandstone, with six arches, built in 1599. It is much wider than Warkworth Bridge, and the recesses are deeper; but the ribbed masonry is found inside the arches, and the general type persists. But the Warkworth Bridge has one rare feature—the defensive tower across the river. These towers, common during the Middle Ages, have disappeared from nearly all our mediæval bridges, just like the chapels which graced the most important ones; but as a chapel may yet be seen on the fourteenth-century bridge at Wakefield, so a defensive tower survives here and there, as on the Monnow Bridge, Monmouth. Perhaps the Warkworth tower will not be allowed to stand much longer. Quite

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PLATE XXI
OLD WARKWORTH BRIDGE,
NORTHUMBERLAND





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WARKWORTH BRIDGE

recently, as M. Jusserand relates, a gipsy's caravan was too tall to pass through the archway, and there it stuck fast until the pavement had been hollowed out. This incident is very suggestive, enabling us to fix with certainty the height of the carts and waggons during and after the fourteenth century. Why was it that our forefathers in so many ways showed a dislike for height and breadth, as in so many of their rooms, doors and windows, and here in the archway of a defensive work? It was a feeling of resistance, a sign of opposition to things dreaded or unpleasant. An archway narrow and low was not only easier to defend, but more difficult to assail, as only a few men could "go for it" abreast, and this led to confusion in the attack. Similarly, low doors and ceilings were thought to be useful in keeping out colds, draughts, and damp from outside. This opposition to the climate brought about some notable things of interest even in our great cathedrals, whose deep porches and small entrances were certainly dictated by the weather. There is thus a good deal to be learnt from that gipsy caravan which stuck fast under the archway of Warkworth Bridge.

As a beautiful contrast to this blunt, warlike piece of masonry, we turn now to the charming picture of Twisel Bridge, Plate 22, with its deep rich wood of hawthorn-trees, above which appears the remnant of Twisel Castle, now destroyed. This, no doubt, is an exquisite example of Gothic bridge-building; and Mr. Orrock has done his work with so much sympathy and knowledge that

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the structure of the mason's craft can be studied in all essential detail. When the Twisel Bridge is compared with the Warkworth, it is clear that the latter was built by hard military hands for defensive purposes, while Twisel must have been designed by one of the many monks who were architects, like Alan de Walsingham. There is here a charm of style, a graceful symmetry, which is quite ecclesiastical. Note, for example, the slightly pointed character—not of the arch alone, but of the masonry above the arch, repeated there till brought to a climax both in the stone parapet and in the curved sweep of roadway. The lines are rhythmical, balanced with a light delicacy: and this seems wonderful after so many centuries of wear and tear and of restoration. Masons in many periods must have repaired Twisel, and always with affectionate skill, for they have harmed it little. This bridge ought to be put under glass! Other bridges belonging to the fourteenth century, like the single-arched one at Danby, Yorkshire, and the four-arched bridge at Llangollen, North Wales, are hard, stubborn, and uncouth, when contrasted with the supple vigour and refinement of Twisel. I should be ready to wager a peppercorn to a brewer's horse, that some architect monk made the plans and watched the masons: and perhaps he lived in that monastery to which Scott refers in "Marmion," where the hero enters Lennel's convent by the Tweed, to be entertained by Saint Bernard's Abbot:

TWISEL BRIDGE

“Next morn the Baron climb'd the tower,
To view afar the Scottish power,
Encamp'd on Flodden edge ;
The white pavilions made a show,
Like remnants of the winter snow,
Along the dusky ridge.”

But presently it is seen that there is unusual movement in the English army, as well as in the flashing host of Scotland. Then :

“The Scots beheld the English host
Leave Barmore Wood, their evening post,
And heedful watch'd them as they cross'd
The Till by Twisel Bridge.”

Scott draws a vivid picture of the crossing :

“High sight it is, and haughty, while
They dive into the deep defile ;
Beneath the cavern'd cliff they fall,
Beneath the castle's airy wall.
By rock, by oak, by hawthorn-tree,
Troop after troop are disappearing ;
Troop after troop their banners rearing,
Upon the eastern bank you see.

“That morn, to many a trumpet clang,
Twisel ! thy rock's deep echo rang ;
And many a chief of birth and rank,
Saint Helen ! at thy fountain drank.
Thy hawthorn glade, which now we see
In spring-tide bloom so lavishly,
Had then from many an axe its doom,
To give the marching columns room.”

Yes, “Lord Surrey's o'er the Till !” It is the morning of September 9, 1513. Surrey, from his headquarters at Barmore Wood, notes that the Scotch have chosen an impregnable position. Then, following his son's good advice, he marches forward

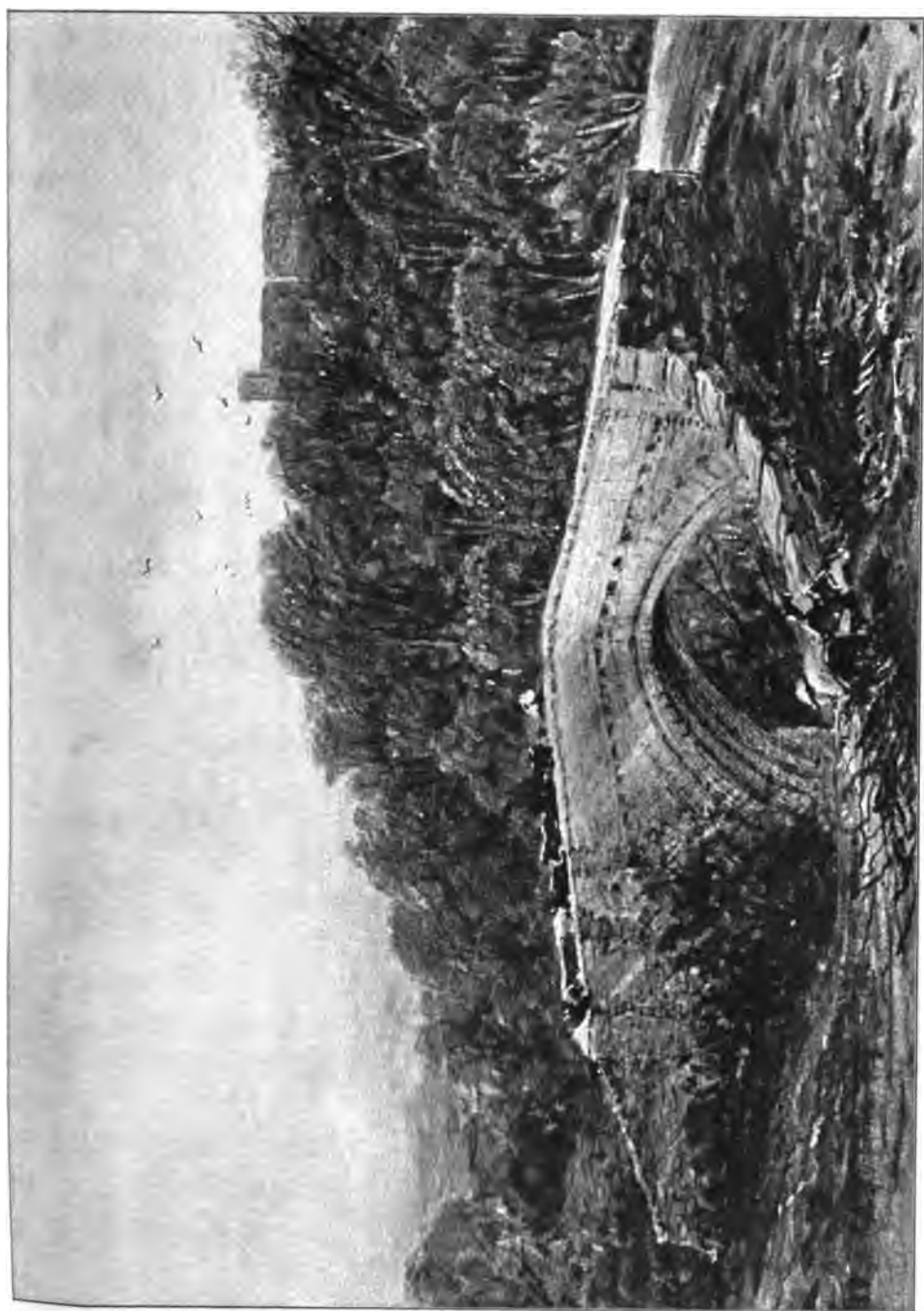
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in a north-westerly direction, and across the Till, by Twisel Bridge, his van and artillery begin laboriously to pass, while the rear-guard column fords the river about a mile higher up. In this way Surrey not only turns the flank of the Scotch army, but places the English troops between James IV. and Scotland. While the bridge is blocked with cannon, James might well make a counter move, driving a great wedge of troops between Surrey's vanguard and rear-guard. It would be easy to crush the English at this moment. But the King, that "champion of the dames," is said to be in love, philandering with Lady Heron ; while others believe that he wants to have his enemies before him on a plain field, and is chivalrously pleased at the thought that the battle will not be unfair to the English. Whatever the cause of King James's folly, the day is evidently lost before the fight begins. Not even the most excellent army that Scotland ever raised can recover from the blow struck with such deadly aim at the Scottish flank and rear.

But James now begins to act with thought and determination. He orders his men to burn their huts, and decides that the greater part of them shall take up a position on a hill more to the north, called the hill of Brankston. The smoke from the burning huts, drifting towards the English army, hides the Scotch movements. On that hill James ought to remain, for it is clear that Surrey and his troops, when they get through the smoke, and halt within a quarter of a mile from Brankston, are

PLATE XXII

**OLD TWISEL BRIDGE OVER THE RIVER
TILL IN NORTHUMBERLAND, NEAR
FLODDEN FIELD**



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FLODDEN FIELD

amazed at the number of men mustered on the summit, some in wedge-shaped masses, and others in squares. To take this defended hill will be bloodshed indeed. But Surrey, having joined his two divisions, moves forward; and now the Scotch, by all that's wonderful, begin to march down the hill in perfect order and in profound silence:

“O for one hour of Wallace wight,
Or well-skill'd Bruce, to rule the fight,
And cry—‘Saint Andrew and our right!’”

The spirit of Bruce has not come down to James IV.; but that fine leader over there, the brave Lord Home, has it, and with his troop of spearmen he furiously thrusts back the right wing of the English vanguard, under Sir Edmund Howard. The carnage is terrible, the English ranks are pierced and broken, their leader, too, falls from his horse; there is much dismay and great confusion; while Home's men run on, swearing and cheering, till at last they come face to face with a rescue-party of outlaws, under the bastard Heron, a brave fellow with a genius for battle, who restores the fight for England. Over there, Lord Dacre has a reserve, about fifteen hundred English cavalry, big armoured men on big armoured horses; and now this great steel-clad troop starts cumbrously to amble forward. It moves with uncouth slowness, but yet, little by little, it gains speed and momentum, and with tremendous force breaks in upon the Scotch spearmen, whose ranks are disordered, and hurls them into complete ruin.

Meantime Surrey is engaged with King James,

OLD ENGLAND

and makes little headway. The King, fighting on foot, is surrounded by picked men, whose armour is so thick that the English arrows do little harm. It is those silent fellows marching down the hill that take from Scotland her last hope. Into them the arrows whistle with horrible results ; and when the disordered Scots reach the plain, they are met by a hurricane of steel, a mass of charging-men-at-arms, and the day is lost. A little more than sixty minutes have passed since the battle began—the shortest battle known, and one of the most deadly. The Scotch lost from eight to ten thousand men, including their King, his illegitimate son, the Archbishop of Saint Andrews, two other bishops, two abbots, twelve earls, thirteen barons, and fifty other gentlemen of rank. It was the English archers who won this terrible stricken field ; and Parliament soon recognised this fact by passing a new statute to enforce regular practice with the big war-bow. One of the bows from Flodden Field is treasured to this day by the Royal Company of Archers, Edinburgh. It is a formidable weapon, the estimated strength being from 80 to 90 lbs.

What archer of to-day could pull this Flodden bow ? And what regiment would care to face a great humming flight of the old-English war-arrows, strong shafts with terrible barbed heads, sharp as a needle's point, and covered with a deep rust full of microbes that poisoned every wound ? Read Ambroyse Paré, a surgeon of the French army in the time of Francis I. ; he has much to say about the treatment of arrow-wounds ; and to read his

RICHMOND, YORKSHIRE

Methode pour traicter les Playes is to feel aghast at the hour's mischief done at Flodden by the English archers. At present, in a battle lasting three days, the slaughter would be less. See, then, what Mr. Orrock does for us. He paints the historic and beautiful little Twisel Bridge, and instantly we are with Scott and Marmion, with King James IV. and Lord Surrey, with the great armies on Flodden Field; and having been present at the immense slaughter, we are forced by circumstances to think for a moment of the old English war-bow, to which so many English kings gave their allegiance. Oh, there is no lack of historical romances in our English landscapes if only we think it worth while to read them.

Very suggestive and good is the sketch which Mr. Orrock has made in his view of Richmond, Yorkshire, Plate 23, with the stepping-stones between us and the historic bank opposite, where quaint old cottages are huddled together by the Swale's edge, while above on the hillside the ruined castle looms out through a thin haze—ruined at long last, though Richmond Castle during its active life was never assaulted or besieged. The age of this stronghold is illustrated by the fact that William the Lion was carried there in 1174, after the tilting adventure with Ralph de Glanville on Alnwick fields. At that period there was probably a wooden bridge, the ancestor of the fourteenth-century stone bridge in Mr. Orrock's drawing, where we get an epitome of the Middle Ages. At the foot of many a castle a group of cottages grew

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into a hamlet, then into a village, then into a town ; and note also with what discriminating kindness the subtle and visiting hand of Time has played with Richmond. The old houses are spared ; and the heroic bridge is to-day as useful as it ever was ; it is only the ruins of feudalism which Time has shattered into a fragment of epic poetry.

It is not generally known that Richmond Castle, Yorkshire, is one of the many places in which, according to popular legends, King Arthur lies asleep, with all the great Knights of the Round Table. Spell-bound in their enchanted rest, these heroes lie in a crypt under the " roots " of the great tower ; and near them on a stone table is a horn, and a wondrous sword—Excalibur, perhaps—awaits the coming of some one brave enough to draw it from its sheath. Then King Arthur and his Knights will awake, and pass from their magic sleep into action as magical.

One man, so the legend says, found his way into the crypt, guided there and guarded by a supernatural being ; and he saw that Arthur might yet come again, and come with all good things. For the sleepers were all there, under the tower, making the dimness faintly radiant. The guide took up the sword and the horn, and gave them to the man, and commanded him to draw the one and sound the other ; and the adventurer made an effort to obey, but his heart failed him when the sword Excalibur was partly unsheathed, for the sleepers began to stir, and their armour bickered, and a feeling of strange life quivered in the air about him : great fear came, his

PLATE XXIII
RICHMOND AND ITS BRIDGE, YORKSHIRE



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RICHMOND CASTLE

hand lost its hold, and the sword went back clicking into its place. "Come with all good things, and war shall be no more." The man may have had words like these in his mind when he entered the crypt, but he was driven thence by a sudden and strong wind, a great voice ringing out these words :

"If thou hadst either drawn
The sword or wound that horn,
Thou hadst been the luckiest man
That ever was born."

King Arthur in his sleep does not encourage good poetry.

Richmond Castle was built by Alan Rufus, a near kinsman of William the Conqueror, and the husband of Howise, William's daughter. In 1070, after the siege of York, William desired to show his appreciation of Alan's loyalty, but not at his own expense. Edwin, Earl of Chester, known as beautiful Edwin, had valuable lands, about two hundred manors and townships; and he was defending York and giving William no end of trouble. Therefore he was dispossessed, and all his property became Alan's. Richmond formed part of this new wealth, and the castle was put up to overawe the disinherited Englishmen who bided their time in Scotland and in Yorkshire forests. Built on the edge of a steep rock above the river Swale, surrounded by a strong wall, and protected by towers, Richmond Castle was a formidable prison, and hence the policy which singled it out as the best place in which William the Lion, King of

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Scotland, could be held securely. Richard I. ruled for some years by deputy in this fortress, and Edward the Third, in the year 1343, gave the earldom of Richmond to his third son, John of Gaunt, then three years old, who eventually restored it to his father in exchange for other lands. The next Earl of Richmond was John Earl of Mountford and Duke of Bretagne, a son-in-law of Edward III. Much later, in 1485, when the Earl of Richmond became King of England, under the name of Henry VII., Richmondshire was attached to the crown. Henry VIII. made it into a duchy, and his natural son, Henry Fitzroy, who died without issue in 1535, was the first Duke. Another Duke of Richmond, Charles Lennox, will be remembered as the natural son of Charles II. by the Duchess of Portsmouth; and the Lennox family holds to this day the honour and titles of Richmondshire.

Whitaker says truly in his book on this place that the feudatories of Richmondshire during many centuries beheld in the castle walls the only defence they had against predatory warfare. Even the Scots, who feared little, were afraid to attack this stronghold. The most noteworthy feature at the present time is the Norman Keep, built by Conan, the fourth Earl of Richmond, in the year 1146; he carried up the masonry to the height of thirty-three yards, and made the walls eleven feet in thickness.

The governor of Richmond Castle, in the year 1317, was a famous watch-dog of the Marches, Schyr Thomas, a great rival of James Douglas. The

A FEAT OF ARMS

English noble heard one day that his enemy had in preparation a great feast, to be held at Syntailey, and that his stronghold would be without troops during the festivities. Douglas had chosen Tedworth Forest as his favourite place of refuge, and Schyr Thomas hit upon the brilliant idea of cutting it down, tree by tree, while his foe enjoyed himself at Syntailey. For this purpose he got together a large force and armed it with axes; trumpets sounded, and the troops passed across Richmond Bridge, never for a moment suspecting that spies had already warned Douglas of the whole business. The Scot, with fifty chosen men, lay in ambush above a narrow defile, and welcomed the English force with a flight of arrows. Thomas fell; his men turned tail, seemingly, for Douglas met with so little resistance that he was able to come down to the fallen Englishman and stab him to death with a knife, but without knowing who his victim was. On that day Thomas wore upon his helm a hat of "furryt," and this thing Douglas took as a token of his victory.

We pass on from Richmond to Knaresborough, the subject of Plate 24, showing the bridge and the river Nidd, the growth of town life along the bank-side, the old church raised up above its congregation of homes, and over all the memory of something which cannot be seen, the castle. The bridge is believed to be one of the oldest in England by descent, but nothing now remains of the early structures. Knaresborough had two bridges, the High Bridge and the Low Bridge; both were

OLD ENGLAND

enlarged and rebuilt in the reign of George III., the one in 1773, and the other in 1779.

Over Knaresborough the past lingers in a shy lifeless way. The town looks—

“ Remote, unfriended, melancholy, slow,”

a bankrupt that fears to recall its golden times. For Knaresborough, century after century, held its own among the most important places in the north of England. As its name indicates, it was once a Saxon fortress ; there is reason to believe that it was well known to the ancient Britons and to the Romans, perhaps a fortified camp ; under the Normans it put on royal airs and became very powerful ; when its military reign was ended by Act of Parliament in 1646, a time of peace began, and the town grew into a watering-place, a rival of Harrogate ; then it sent big men to the House of Commons, Mackintosh and Brougham ; and by these gradual stages, through action into talk, Knaresborough arrived at its present standing, too senile even to be garrulous.

At the time of the Conquest, Knaresborough belonged to the Crown, and its fortress gave protection to ten villages. The name was derived from *Knare*, a knot or crag, as illustrated in the following line from Dryden :

“ Or woods with knots and knares deformed and old.”

The castle, like the one at Richmond, was erected after William the Conqueror had wasted the northern parts of England, slaying 100,000 persons. He was a fiend, carried away by a fury of insane

PLATE XXIV
KNARESBOROUGH AND ITS BRIDGE,
YORKSHIRE





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YORKSHIRE RAVAGED

passion similar to that which caused him, in the street of Bruges (so tradition says), to chastise the lady who afterwards married him—Mathilda, daughter of Baldwin. Yorkshire was littered with dead bodies, towns were plundered and left, the Normans passing over a doomed land as the Israelites did over the cities of the Canaanites. Many Englishmen fled into Scotland, and became servants to any one who had food enough to keep them from starvation. Others sought refuge in the hills and forests, and said that they would not sleep in a house until they had revenged themselves on the Normans. It became clear to William that his barons in the North would need strong castles indeed ; and many a year went by before an English King ventured north of the Humber unaccompanied by an army. The stern northern mind did not forget the past.

Knarborough Castle was built by Serlo de Burgh, Baron of Tonsburg in Normandy, to whom the manor was given as a reward for his services at Hastings and elsewhere. The third owner, Eustace Fitz-John, appeared on the Scotch side in the battle of the Standard, August 22, 1138, when the half-naked Scots fought with heroic courage against the English archers, losing eleven thousand men, according to Roger de Wendover. "You might see," said Aylred, "a Gallowglass fighting, covered with arrows like quills upon a porcupine, till he fell beneath a number of wounds." After this battle Knarborough was given to Robert d'Estoteville, one of Stephen's followers, whose daughter married

OLD ENGLAND

Hugh de Moreville. This man held the castle in her right, and afterwards shut himself up in it with three companions during a whole year. These comrades were William de Tracy, Richard Britto, and Reginald Fitzurse—the most infamous men in Europe in those days, being the murderers of Thomas Becket, on December 29th, 1170. Henry II. was in Normandy when the murder took place. But the assassins were not only members of his court; they could say with truth that Henry had expressed a wish to see the last of Becket. “What a pack of fools and cowards have I nourished in my house, that not one of them will avenge me of this upstart clerk.” Henry in these words suggested the murder to his four courtiers, but there’s no reason to believe that he intended to move all Christendom with horror. The Pope laid an interdict upon England, and the King, overcome with despair, returned home in a panic, fled into Wales, then into Ireland; at last he went back to Normandy, and reconciled himself with the Pope, denying on oath that he was a party to the murder, and professing that he held England as a fief of Rome. Roger de Wendover, speaking of Henry’s penance at the tomb of Becket, says: “By this means the favour of the blessed martyr was secured, and on that very Saturday, God delivered into his hands William, King of Scots, who was forthwith confined in Richmond Castle.” In this singular reflection a whole age is summed up.

Meantime, however, the four assassins had secured themselves in Knaresborough Castle, but their

THE PEASANTS' REVOLT

safety was almost worse than punishment. None would speak to them, or sit at the same table ; any food which they had touched was thrown aside as unclean ; the people howled outside, and the Pope's anger and justice passed the drawbridge. Nevertheless, at the end of a year, they were pardoned, and sent off on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. There they died, and were buried before the gate of the Temple.

In 1319, Knaresborough town was sacked and burned by the Scotch bordermen, while in 1381, when the Peasants' War began in the south under Wat the Tiler, Jack the Miller, Jack Straw and Jack Trueman, the villeins of Yorkshire also flamed out into rebellion ; and it was then that the second wife of John of Gaunt, Constance of Castile, came to Knaresborough and set up her abode in the castle, because her own people at Pontefract dared not open the gates of her lord's stronghold. Thus it was that Knaresborough Castle had its day of utility, then passed into a ruin ; while the Peasants' War, which Constance of Castile feared but despised, was to have results destined to outlive the castle by many centuries, by producing changes in the State's attitude to labourers which made our English villages the best ordered and the prettiest in the world. Nor is this all. The fear that caused John of Gaunt's wife to fly from Pontefract to Knaresborough, followed by a rabble of howling peasants with torches, was just the same fear that passed the first Reform Bill ; and it is not too much to say that the working classes have power enough now to make the wrecking of an empire an occupation for

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odd half-hours, a hobby to fill up the crannies in their time. Altogether, the picture of Knaresborough, like that of Richmond, Yorkshire, has shown us a bridge connecting the life of a little northern town with the mainlands of English history. And now let us take a glance at a few general questions that concern bridges and roads.

It has been said that all bridges have had their origin either in the needs of trade or in the requirements of defence. Doubtless there is much truth in this belief. But a good many bridges have owed their beginning to a love of sport, to repentance, and to sorrow for the loss of life. It was a love of hunting that caused the Earl of Essex, favourite of Queen Elizabeth, to build over the Trent the first Essex Bridge, at Shugborough, near to Great Haywood, so that he and his dependents and friends might have sport in the Cannock Chase. It was called a pack-horse bridge, because the width was just enough to allow passage for horsemen and wayfarers. There were no fewer than forty-three arches. At the present time the Essex Bridge has fourteen and the style is Georgian.

Another bridge over the Trent is said to have had its beginning in a tragic love-story. At Chellaston, four miles from Derby, there lived two ladies, inseparable companions ; one had a lover, a soldier at the wars ; and this good fellow on his return home, after all the perils of the battlefield, came by his death in attempting to ford the river Trent at flood. To his memory the ladies built the Swarkestone Bridge, a great structure of many fine

PLATE XXV
BRIDGE OVER THE WHARFE,
YORKSHIRE





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ROADS AND BRIDGES

arches ; and on this work they spent all their fortune. It was hoped that a toll might be levied at the bridge, partly for its repairs and partly to support the donors ; but leave could not be obtained, and the two good women were driven by their poverty into an almshouse, where they died forgotten by the public who gladly made use of their charitable bridge. Charity is not unlike a surgical operation which relieves pain by giving pain, and is remembered by the pain it gives, not by the comfort which it brings. This explains the rarity of gratitude.

During the Middle Ages, as we have seen, the restoration of roads and bridges was upheld both as a national duty and also as an act of piety. Besides that, it formed part of the *trinoda necessitas*. The clergy were exempt from many obligations of a national kind, but in the matter of roads and bridges they were ordinary children of the State, and therefore subject to the duty of mending the highways and bridges adjacent to their landed property. In France, during the twelfth century the leadership in bridge-building was taken by a body of monks known as the *Pontife* brothers, the Bridge Friars ; while in England, two centuries later, the Guild of the Holy Cross in Birmingham, like several guilds elsewhere, undertook the mending of the public highways, among other things of an admirable nature. M. Jusserand draws attention to this fact, but I do not think that he passes a just verdict on the condition of English mediæval roads and bridges. He has gathered together many

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references to bridges and roads out of repair ; and upon this evidence he comes to the conclusion that the highways were bad, a verdict in flat contradiction to the opinion formed by the late Mr. Thorold Rogers, who spent his life in the study of English agriculture with special reference to the Middle Ages. Thorold Rogers may be taken as the best judge in this matter.

If Englishmen had been callous about the condition of the mediæval highways there would be fewer contemporary records of negligence, for the usual and common things of life are not often mentioned in public documents of the early times. It is interesting and picturesque, not only to quote the cases of negligence, but to form from their evidence many wide generalisations. Each printed page looks formidably learned, and the reader does not see at first that the picture represented is out of focus. The mistakes are precisely akin to those which would be made now if any one were to sum up the present-day character of England from the following sources of information: legal trials, reports of workhouses and lunatic asylums, descriptions of poverty in town and country, newspaper gossip about crime and criminals, and official statements as to the work done by the innumerable humane societies—from the one which protects children from their parents, to another that prevents cruelty to animals. Imagine the horror which these documents will produce three hundred years hence, if they chance to be unaccompanied by a great many pictures of the beautiful and noble:

MEDIÆVAL ROADS

aspects of to-day's social life. The historian, piling quotation upon quotation, will portray twentieth-century England as a horrible and abominable country, a blend between a hospital, a workhouse, and an asylum for criminal lunatics. Yet his false judgment would be based on varied evidence more abundant than that in our mediæval records. Let us then take care when a picturesque historian begins to display his carefully arranged network of erudite quotations; and let us not forget to compare his deductions with the general course of events in the ages of which he speaks.

For instance, the roads and bridges were good enough to enable Harold to travel with speed from Stamford Bridge to Hastings; and in all subsequent periods, when troops had to be gathered from all parts of the country for foreign wars, the high-ways did not prevent the summoning of men and their muster at the chosen ports. These big general facts in history are like the final figures in a profit and loss account, which tell us at a glance the position of a business without confusing our judgment with details. Bad weather, it is true, and particularly floods and snow-storms, delayed wayfarers of the Middle Ages, just as they interfere now with railway travelling; but I feel sure that the mediæval roads suited the mediæval people and their needs. Cartage was very cheap, journeys were made rapidly in good weather, and urgent protests were raised when some parts of the arterial system of roads became paralysed through neglect. Then again, kings and nobles were

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constantly on the move from castle to castle and from manor to manor, so that the national highways were under the unceasing inspection of men who held the highest influence in the State, and who wished to travel with the greatest possible speed and the least possible discomfort. Moreover, as their carts and carriages were without springs, and exceedingly heavy, the incessant going from one manor to another would have been well-nigh impossible if the roads had been bad. Take as an example the Earls of Northumberland in the fifteenth century. They had three castles, but only sufficient furniture for one, so it was removed from one house to another in seventeen carts and a waggon. M. J. J. Jusserand supposes that in those days people were contented with little; but even a mad king, accompanied by a court of lunatics, would soon have learnt that a multitude of very heavy springless waggons could not be moved along bad roads. Last of all, it is pointed out by Mr. Thorold Rogers that English carriers, in the Middle Ages, were by common law bailees of the goods, and liable to the consignors for their safe delivery. Yet a carrier charged in winter for the double journey only $3\frac{1}{2}d.$ per mile for moving a tun of wine (252 gallons). Surely that speaks well for the roads and bridges? For a tun of wine was a very difficult thing to carry over the ancient way from Southampton northward, and many a thirsty footpad would wish to broach it.

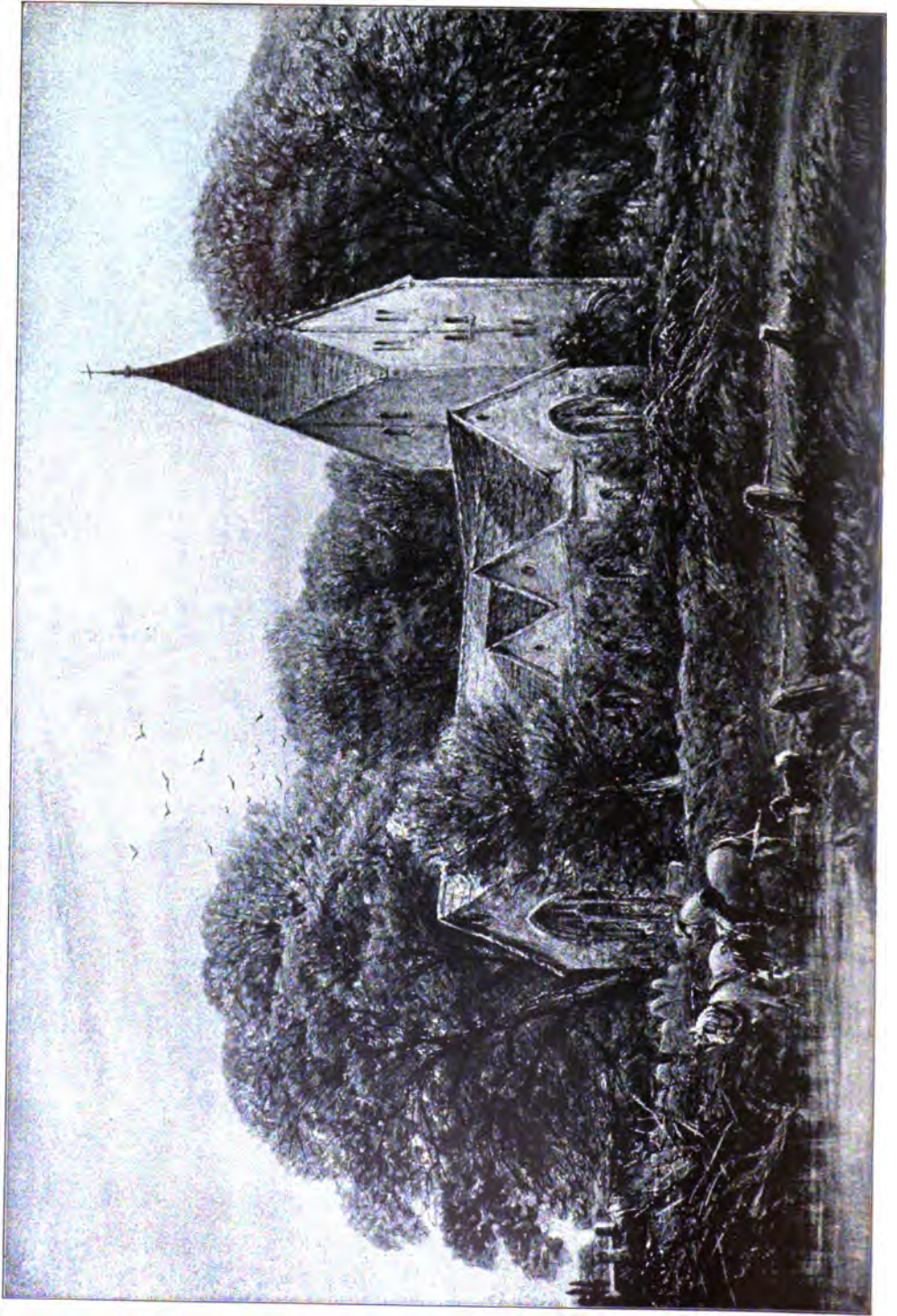


PLATE XXVI
CHURCH OF SAXON ORIGIN, AT
SOMPTING, SUSSEX

CHAPTER III

THE CHURCH IN THE MIDST OF WAR

WHEN Augustine with his monks reached Kent in the year 597, he had many dangers to face and many difficulties to solve, so he needed all the help that could be given by his complete trust in the genius of the new Faith. One problem may have seemed almost insuperable. There was a repugnance native in pagan minds for the brief eloquence of the Gospels. The New Testament left a great deal unsaid, while the Saxons, like all primitive races, had a masterful passion for thrilling stories abundant in details, in special circumstances, in particularities of time and place and action. Their minds, as fiercely vehement as the mythology of their nature-worship, revelled in blood, and saw in carnage an eternal future: through bravery in war, and death on the field of battle, they hoped to reach their paradise in the Hall of Slaughter.

During the one hundred and forty-eight years which separated their arrival at Ebbsfleet from the coming of Augustine, these Teutonic barbarians had enjoyed a reign of terror, judgment and execution going hand in hand in all their actions. Under

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the Romans some form of Christianity had prevailed in Britain; under the Saxons it had vanished utterly, like most of the Roman towns.

It is true, no doubt, that this delight in slaughter and destruction grew weaker through excess of use. By the end of the sixth century, trade and commerce had begun to return; and a lust of gain acted as a slow antidote on the lust of bloodshed. This was favourable to Augustine's mission; but even with this help, and supported also by the sympathy and influence of Bertha, Ethelbert's Christian wife, the Benedictines were harassed by numberless trials.

The victory won in Kent, with the baptism of the king and people, required qualities of character other than patience, gentleness, courage, and the flame of religious ardour. Tact was essential, and concession too, a gift for compromise, and with it an imagination as alert as Bunyan's, ready at a moment's notice to turn short truths into winning and exciting narratives. Dante's minute imagery of terror—something of *that* was essential also, since the battle was one of Christian tongues against the ferocity of Saxon minds. And there is evidence to prove that Christian teachers, in all parts of Europe, bent their appeal to suit their hearers' tastes and temperaments. They stooped to conquer, and by so doing they got leverage enough to lift up their listeners.

There was nothing of falsehood in this; for the missionaries had much in common with the heathen. By nature they were children, fond of

CHRISTIAN MYTHS

excitement, lovers of the marvellous, dramatic, ready to put faith in anything that stirred them with intense pleasure. We cannot suppose that all the belief in miracles was make-believe ; we cannot suppose that all the religious myths, so common in early Christian times, were invented with a purpose to mislead the people ; as well might we suppose that when a preacher of to-day starts out from a text and runs his own course, he does so to falsify the Bible. Religious fables were the sermons of those enthusiastic early days, and most of them had their original source in the first battles which the missionaries fought against minds altogether out of touch with the reticence of the Gospels. Further, in the myths which gathered about the life of Christ and His Apostles, there was a beauty and interest that made them very popular even during the best times of the Renaissance, when painters were inspired so often by them that a great many of their subject-pictures were affected. Thus the story of the Flight into Egypt, as represented by most painters, was touched with the symbolism of legends, as when the branch of the palm tree bent downwards and caressed the head of the Infant Jesus.

To put ourselves in touch with the style of sermon preached by the early missionaries in England and elsewhere, we have only to recall to memory "The Golden Legend," the "History of the Nativity of Mary," the "Protevangelium of St. James," "The Gospel of St. Thomas," and the religious plays of Hroswitha, a nun of the Benedictine order,

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born in Saxony, who died at Gandershein in 984. These works, and such plays as the Coventry "Mysteries," show very clearly the reciprocal influence which Christianity and Paganism had on each other. They make up a body of picturesque symbolism and pious legend from which we may easily guess the methods of the early missionaries. There is no trace of self-restraint. All the qualities are those of the child mind, which is the pagan mind also, only with less cruelty of an active kind. The child mind delights in stories of wonder, in tales of magic and of terrible deaths ; and the Christian myths gave that characteristic full play, adding details to the pain that martyrs suffered, and embroidering many incidents for dramatic narratives. There was, for example, the life of Simon Magus, a notorious magician among the Jews, of whom St. Augustine said that if St. Peter "had fallen on the traitor Simon, he would certainly have torn him to pieces with his teeth." Simon Magus went to Rome, where he was befriended by Claudius and Nero. The legend goes on to say that he challenged St. Peter and St. Paul to a trial of skill, in the presence of one emperor, and was put to shame by the Apostles ; he failed to restore to life a dead boy, while they succeeded. "At length he undertook to fly up to heaven in sight of the emperor and the people ; and, crowned with laurel, and supported by demons, he flung himself from a tower, and appeared for a while to float thus in the air, but St. Peter, falling on his knees, commanded the demons to let go their hold, and Simon, pre-

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PLATE XXVII
SOUTH-WEST VIEW OF LINCOLN
CATHEDRAL



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SIMON MAGUS

cipitated to the ground, was dashed to pieces." This romantic story, related by Mrs. Jameson in "Sacred and Legendary Art," was among the most popular myths of the early Christian times; and it must have reminded the native Britons of their own legend of Bladud, the reputed king of Britain in the time of Elijah the prophet. Bladud was famous for his skill in necromancy, and after doing many marvellous deeds, he made himself wings and tried to fly, but fell down, just below the city of Trinovantum, and was killed. He was succeeded by his son Leyr, the legendary founder of Caerleyer, Leicester, concerning whom Shakespeare wrote his noblest tragedy, "King Lear."

The Bladud of Christian history, Simon Magus, became the cause of much trouble in Saxon England, between the Celtic Christians of the North and the Roman Church in the southern districts. The missionaries, coming from different nations, were not only jealous of each other, but disagreed, not without warmth, on certain matters of symbolism and doctrine; and among the disputed points was the ecclesiastical tonsure. The Romans shaved the top of the head, leaving a circle of hair to symbolise the wreath of thorns; while the Celtic monks and their adherents in Northumbria, following the example of St. Columba, shaved the front part of the head in the form of a crescent. This gave much offence to the Roman priesthood, who contended that the Celtic tonsure was the distinctive badge of Simon Magus and his disciples. There was much disturbance on this point, then the two parties met

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at the Council of Whitby (A.D. 664), and Oswy of Northumbria, the seventh Bretwalda, decided in favour of the Roman tonsure, as resting on the authority of St. Peter. Some of the Scotch monks were content, while others retired in displeasure to the isle of Hii (Iona).

There was thus a drawback to the influence of Simon Magus. The legend of his life, in any case, would not have been as powerful as the detailed mythical story of Judas Iscariot, who was certainly the most effective of all the dialectic weapons that the missionaries employed. One legend of his life is summed up very well by Mrs. Jameson :

“ According to this legend, he was of the tribe of Reuben. Before his mother brought him forth, she dreamed that the son who lay in her womb would be accursed, that he would murder his father, commit incest with his mother and sell his God. Terrified at her dream, she took counsel with her husband, and they agreed to avert the threatened calamity by exposing the child. As in the story of Œdipus, from which, indeed, this strange wild legend seems partly borrowed, the means taken to avert the threatened curse caused its fulfilment. Judas, at his birth, is enclosed in a chest, and flung into the sea ; the sea casts him up, and being found on the shore, he is fostered by a certain king and queen as their own son ; they have, however, another son, whom Judas, malignant from his birth, beats and oppresses, and at length kills in a quarrel over a game at chess. He then flies to Judea, where he enters the service of Pontius Pilate

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JUDAS ISCARIOT

as page. In due time he commits the other monstrous crimes to which he was predestined ; and when he learns from his mother the secret of his birth, he is filled with a sudden contrition and terror ; he hears of the prophet who has power on earth to forgive sins ; and seeking out Christ, throws himself at His feet. Our Saviour, not deceived, but seeing in him the destined betrayer, . . . accepts him as His apostle : he becomes the seneschal or steward of Christ, bears the purse, and provides for the common wants. In this position, avarice, the only vice to which he was not yet addicted, takes possession of his soul, and makes the corruption complete. . . . When Mary Magdalene anoints the feet of our Lord he is full of wrath. . . . 'Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor ? This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief.' Through avarice, he yields to the bribe offered by the Jews. Then follow the scenes of the betrayal of Christ, and the late repentance and terrible suicide of the traitor, as recorded in Scripture."

In the Chronicle attributed to Matthew of Westminster, this legend is related with greater circumstance, and in a way which must have made it irresistibly real to the Saxons. Thus, when Judas enters the court of Pilate he is put in authority over everything, and unknown to all concerned, his father and mother live close by in a house surrounded by a beautiful apple orchard. Pilate sees the apples and longs for them so much that he is ready to faint with hunger ; so Judas, at Pilate's

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wish, goes to the orchard and steals some apples ; but he is interrupted by his father, who, not knowing his son, attacks the thief, and is slain by Judas after a long struggle, receiving a blow with a stone, which strikes him on the neck. Thus the story as told in the English chronicle is built up with incidents of a minutely graphic sort ; and with such myths as this one of Judas, the missionaries must have found the tongue more powerful than the sword.

Not that they placed too much confidence in speech. To hold the story-loving pagan mind was a first step toward a lasting conversion ; but in their work, as in art, much preparation of a reasoned and practical nature was essential ; and we can get from the Venerable Bede (673-735) some hints of the wisdom shown by the evangelists in their daily intercourse with the Saxons. As an example we may take the conversion of the South Saxons at Selsey, in the peninsula south of Chichester, brought about by Wilfrid of York in the years 681 to 686. Wilfrid noticed that the people did not know how to fish in the sea, where they caught nothing but eels ; with cheery patience he got rid of this ignorance, and we may believe that he did not forget to join his lesson to the Scripture narrative of Christ's two miracles as a fisherman, and the feeding of the five thousand with the two fishes and five loaves. With the help of this tact and judgment, Wilfrid won his way into the hearts of the people, who became his converts. Then he built a monastery, and established at Selsey a bishopric, which lasted to the time of the Norman Conquest,

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PLATE XXVIII
THE RUINS OF FURNESS ABBEY, NEAR
DALTON, LANCASHIRE



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NORMAN CHURCH-BUILDERS

when it was transferred to Chichester, perhaps because of those encroaching tides which now roll far above the religious buildings founded by Wilfrid of York.

In this way, then, the Christian faith took hold of Saxon England ; and into the atmosphere of this early enthusiasm the imagination must place the typical abbeys and cathedrals which Mr. Orrock has painted with a profound reverence for that which they represent in the making of Old England. Among the abbeys he has chosen the ruins of Rievaulx, Furness, Bolton, and Kirkstall ; among the priories, Lanercost and Ulverscroft ; and among the cathedral churches, Ripon, Lincoln, Durham, and Peterborough. These are all excellent. The pictures, too, show the vision and faculty of a true artist, and all of them, with the one exception of Furness Abbey, display the buildings admirably set in their landscapes, commanding the districts over which they have ruled for centuries. Peterborough Cathedral is a plate in the Introduction ; and before I speak of the others, it will be well to show how church-building was encouraged, for nothing can be more surprising to the modern mind than the never failing river of gold that supplied means for incessant building and re-building during all the centuries of Catholic England.

The Normans did not hesitate to destroy nearly all the ecclesiastical architecture that marked the Saxon type of society, finding the style too blunt, too uncouth ; and although they left a few remains of Saxon churches, as at Old Shoreham,

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Plate 20, and the famous Sompting, Plate 26, they built all over England, in a quite wonderful short space of time, their new places of worship, richer in design and more supple in dignity and proportion. But the Norman style, excellent as it was in its appreciation for the exact balance of voids and solids, of heights and widths, was destined to be transformed by all the later refinements of Gothic, with the result that pure Norman churches became almost as uncommon as the Saxon. The same never ending labour of re-building went on in earlier times before the Norman Conquest. Abbeys and churches were then so often injured by fire, storm, and human violence, were repaired and rebuilt so many times, that their ups and downs of fortune spoke most eloquently of the generous faith underlying all the turbulence of the people. Money flowed into the architectural schemes. Where did it come from? Much wealth, but not by any means all of it, may be accounted for by tithes, bequests, endowments, and the cultivation of monastic and church lands. There was then in England one river as charitable as the Pactolus, which in ancient Lydia was famous for its golden sands. It was the River of Faith, which flowed through the land in pilgrimages, and bore to the local shrines all the suffering folk with their penitence, and their maladies, and their thanksgivings, expressed in money and in farm produce.

One modern clergyman speaks of "the grovelling superstition to which the creation of the miraculous shrines of local saints pandered." But this present-

LINCOLN CATHEDRAL

day criticism of the past is childish and foolish, for its notion of historical perspective is ridiculously false and distorted. Those shrines were made miraculous by the faith of those who visited them ; and in times when the science of medicine was more likely to kill than to cure, devotees returned from a thousand shrines comforted and bettered by their own devotional belief in the curative agency of the relics. Upon their gratitude, and the vast pecuniary resources which it represented year after year, the religious architecture of England rested for its main support. This was one reason that caused every monk and priest to attach extraordinary value to the burial of the good and great inside the churches which they had benefited in life. There are many examples of this in the history of Lincoln Cathedral, Plate 27, page 104.

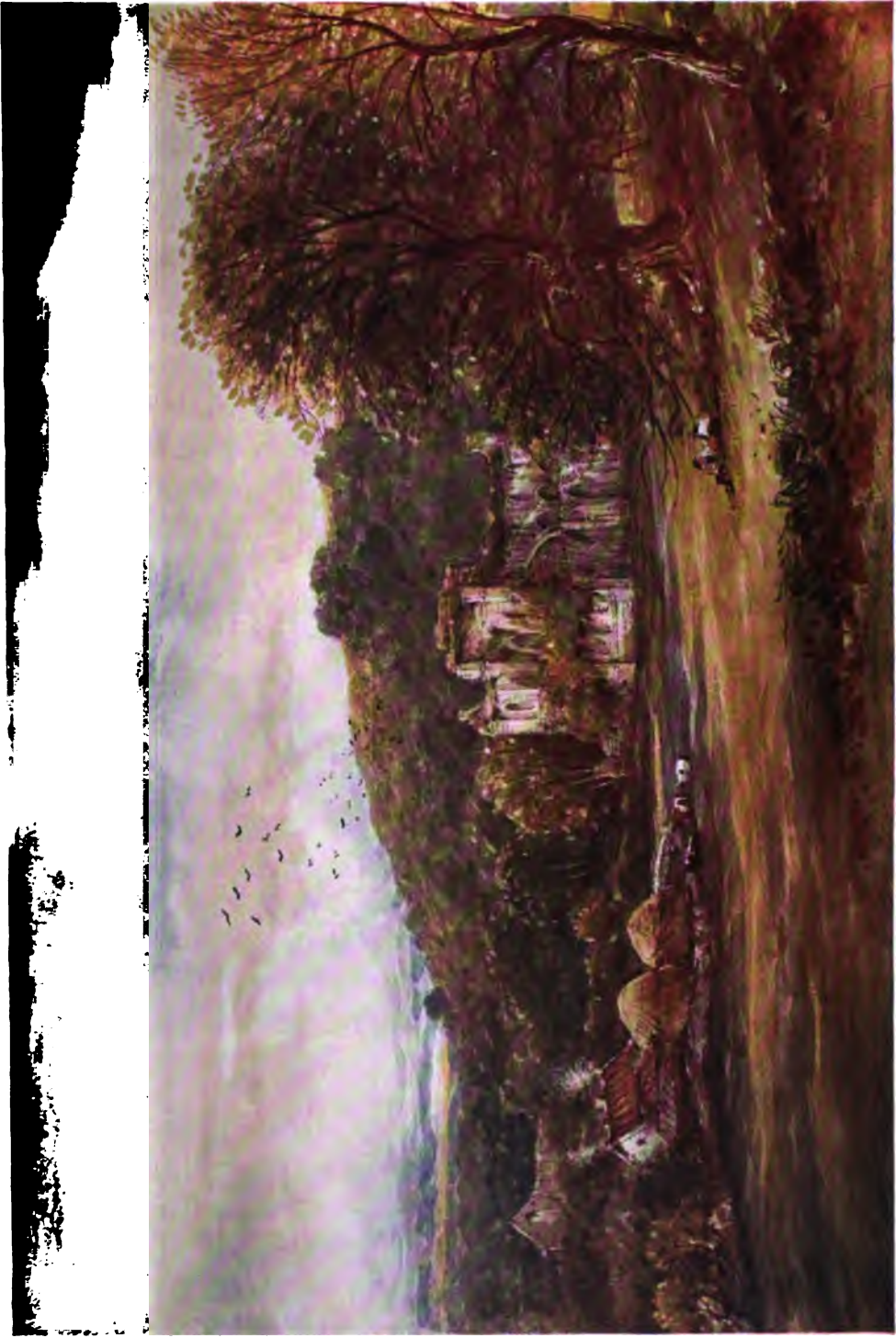
Remigius, the Norman founder, died in May 1092, four days before the date fixed for the consecration of his work ; he was buried in the new church, before the Altar of the Holy Cross, and from his tomb he continued to sway the devotion of the people. The see of Lincoln was empty for two years, and the prelate who then reigned was the dead dwarf, Bishop Remigius, the Benedictine of Féscamp, he who, with twenty men and a ship, joined his master, William the Conqueror. In 1067 he became Bishop of Dorchester, and a few years later he removed his see to Lincoln, which was a higher and more defensive site. Remigius was succeeded by Robert Bloet, Bishop of Lincoln between 1094 and 1123 ; he died suddenly at

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Woodstock, where he was riding with Henry I. in the deerfold ; but his body was carried back to Lincoln, and buried before St. Mary's altar. In this case the people were attracted in a peculiar way, for it was rumoured that "the church-keepers were sore annoyed with his sowle," poor Bishop Bloet, and "other walking spretes, till that place was purged by prayers." This is what we learn from Knighton and Brompton, and the purging by prayer must have drawn an immense congregation, sometime between the burning of the city of Lincoln in June, 1123, and the destruction by fire of the wooden roofs of the cathedral in 1141. Forty-four years later, in 1185, an earthquake shattered Lincoln cathedral from top to bottom, so there was urgent need of all the money which could be obtained. Happily the next Bishop, Hugh of Avalon, the noble St. Hugh of Lincoln (1186-1200), was a man of genius ; under his care all difficulties vanished, and the cathedral was rebuilt on its eastern side. The Bishop was helped by an architect with a French name, Geoffry de Noiers, who may yet have been a member of the de Noiers family in Northamptonshire, well known at that period. To St. Hugh and his architect we owe the eastern transept, the first bay of the great transept, north and south, and the exquisite choir, the oldest known example of Early English unaccompanied by the stern qualities of the Norman style. St. Hugh's Choir at Lincoln is the finest complete work of the Lancet period. It is as beautiful and strong as that saint's character.

PLATE XXIX

**THE RUINS OF RIEVAULX ABBEY NEAR
HELMSLEY IN YORKSHIRE, FOUNDED IN
THE YEAR 1131**



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ST. HUGH OF LINCOLN

Hugh is described as a man of "singular and exquisite tact," "cool and excellent judgment," with "unbending firmness of purpose in what he believed to be right." He worked on the cathedral with his own hands, and perhaps the most devoted of all his great friends, his pet swan, watched him, just as Lacydes of old was accompanied everywhere by a goose. St. Hugh died in London in the autumn of 1200, but his body was brought to Lincoln, a journey of six days by road, and the bier was carried into the cathedral by King John and his courtiers, in the presence of three archbishops and nine bishops. His shrine became famous in all parts of England, and around it gathered many tales of miracles. Pope Honorius III., in the year 1220, canonized Hugh of Lincoln, and sixty years later, in 1280, the saint's hallowed remains were taken from their first resting-place to be enshrined, with great pomp, in the glorious "Angel Choir," newly finished. Edward I. was present at the ceremonial with his queen and children. The Angel Choir, in the eastern limb of the cathedral, was built to glorify the memory of St. Hugh, and to supply a place large enough for his pilgrims. The fame of this good man gained ever in widespread popularity, till it was the best known in England after that of St. Thomas Becket. His shrine was ardently beloved, and, up to the coming of the Reformation, the faith of those who prayed before it made St. Hugh of Lincoln a magical physician, the curer of many sorrows and nervous diseases.

In the records of Lincoln Cathedral there are

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other examples of the wealth which pilgrims brought with them to local shrines, shrines which grew to be so numerous that the eastern limb of a church plan increased in length and importance, so that there might be ample room for all sacred relics and remains. But enough has been said not only to illustrate the influence of shrines on the building funds of the Church, but to give, at the same time, the interest of history to the beautiful drawing of Lincoln, in Plate 27, where the Cathedral from the south-west is viewed from Brayford, in the midst of the picturesque and busy life which will remain for ever the purpose and the cause of the cathedral's well-being.

If we follow to their first source all the prolific revenues of the mediæval Church of England, we come at last to the soil, the land, because everybody lived on the fertility of the land. Farming was the nursing-mother of the whole kingdom ; and in this we touch a subject full of interest, namely, the parochial system and the principle of patronage.

No sooner was the work of the missionaries set well on foot than it became necessary to think of practical means likely to encourage the building of country churches ; and as early as the sixth century (A.D. 541) we find Justinian recognising the principle of patronage, by virtue of which he ruled that any one who founded a church, and enabled it to support a clerk, might nominate the person to be ordained to it, subject only to the Bishop's right of approving the presentee, and of ousting him if he proved unfit. The wisdom of this Justinian law is evident.

PAROCHIAL SYSTEM

Well-to-do owners of land were far more likely to build and endow churches on their estates if they could keep for themselves, and pass on to their descendants, a right of patronage and protection.

This principle of patronage has ever been of the utmost importance to the English parochial system, yet few can explain why certain persons have "livings in their gift." Of course, the parochial system grew up slowly from small beginnings. As early as the seventh century it began to show itself in the work of Paulinus at Lincoln, of St. Aidan in Northumbria, and of Wilfrid at Selsey, for these great men and others built churches and ordained clergy to assist them in rural districts. But it was the seventh Archbishop of Canterbury, Theodore, consecrated in 668, who recognised in full the law of Justinian. With the royal sanction Theodore came to three decisions. The first was that churches must be built and parishes marked out ; the second, that those who had the ability and the wish to endow churches on their own estate should have the perpetual patronage of the living ; and the third, that these donors could keep for their churches the tithes which went otherwise into the Bishop's central fund. These privileges were of immense help to the progress of country life. As the erection of many a monastery, like St. Alban's and St. Edmund's Abbey, meant the foundation of a town, so the building of many a country church meant the gradual coming of a village group of homes ; and the more thought students give to this phase of English history, the more certain they are that

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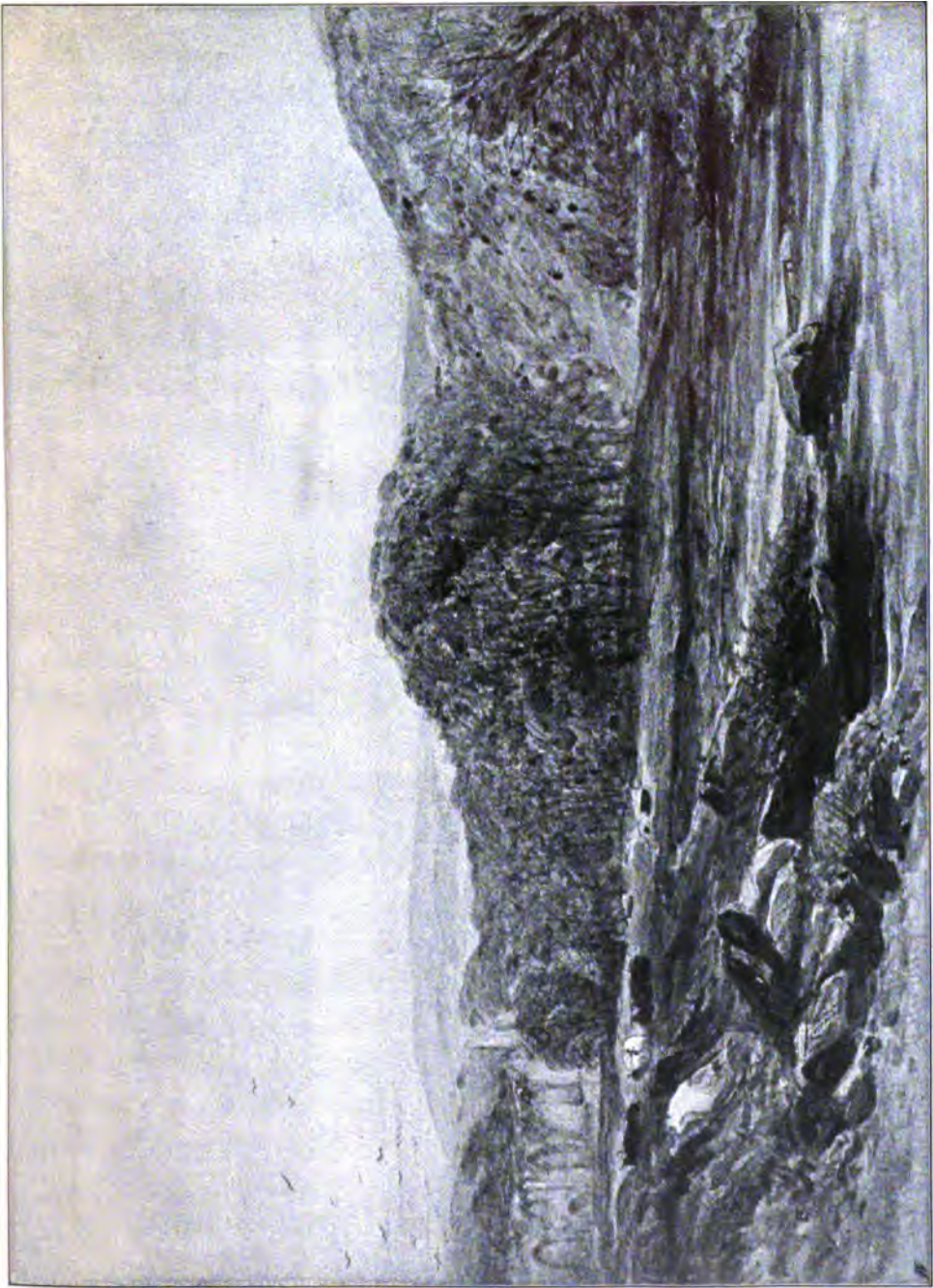
England was made by her Church. What Louis XIV. said of himself, quite without justice, was true of the Church of England during her most glorious times. "*L'état c'est moi*: The State? I am the State."

When Archbishop Theodore started his wise reign, there were few stone churches in England, and Bede, who lived from 673 to 735, noticed the prevalence of wooden churches. It is impossible to learn now in what way they were put together, but we may get in touch with the tradition of their workmanship by reading what Sir G. G. Scott wrote in 1868 concerning the little wooden chapel at Greensted, near Ongar, Essex, built as far back as the year 1013. At that time the Danes were ravaging the countrysides, and Greensted Chapel was put up as a temporary place of shelter for the relics of St. Edmund.

Sir G. G. Scott, R.A. (1811-1878), describes the work as consisting of "cleft oak-trees grooved and tongued together by their edges, and let into grooves in horizontal cells and heads." This craftsmanship, the outcome of an opposition against war enduring through many centuries, has now lasted eight hundred and ninety-five years, and it is the best type we can get to-day for the craft-knowledge displayed in the seventh and eighth centuries. The savagery of these early times may have brought into vogue woodwork of the strongest possible kind, probably of full-grown oak, the most difficult of all woods to set on fire.

The first monasteries were as rough-hewn as a

PLATE XXX
THE RUINS OF BOLTON ABBEY,
YORKSHIRE



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THE FIRST MONASTERIES

settlement of log cabins in the Australian bush of to-day. Each was a group of huts, ruggedly made of wattles and timber, and plastered with clay and mud. The monks were their own builders, and their camp was guarded from wolves by a *vallum*, or ditch. A little hole in each roof let in light to the hut, and through it smoke escaped from a wood fire burning on a hob of clay or a stone hearth. The tallest and largest building, with a cross above it, was the church, the oratorium, often so imperfectly built that it would not keep out moisture; and birds made their nests in its crannies. Next in importance to the church was the abbot's cell, placed on high ground as a sign of authority. There were huts for the other monks, and cabins where visitors could be entertained; a mill, with a pond and mill stream, stables, a byre for cows, and other outhouses. Nothing could have been simpler or more primitive. It was not till the end of the seventh century that the Saxons learned the art of glass windows; and even then, and for centuries later, glass was used very sparingly. The first church windows were latticed or of oiled linen, and the lattice-work was used at times throughout the Middle Ages.

A few stone churches were built in the seventh century, and the name of Paulinus is mentioned in connection with two. One was a predecessor of Lincoln Cathedral. In form and arrangement it copied the Basilican style, which was then growing into magnificence at Rome; and Bede says that the church was beautiful, though in his time the roof

OLD ENGLAND

had disappeared. The second stone church that Paulinus built takes us into the flame of life in the troubled northern counties, a life of great importance in this chapter, because seven of Mr. Orrock's ecclesiastical pictures belong to the north. These are Kirkstall Abbey, Plate 31, Furness Abbey, Plate 28, Rievaulx, Plate 29, Lanercost Priory, Plates 32 and 33, Bolton Abbey, Plate 30, and Durham Cathedral, Plate 34.

During the Middle Ages there were two centuries that deserved to be called creative—the seventh and the thirteenth—and both were of transcendent value in the history of the Church. To the thirteenth century belonged the coming of the friars, and the noblest types of English Gothic. But the seventh century was greater still, greater indeed than any other in the making of Old England. We have seen how Theodore then established the parochial system; and heroic priests and monks, men of genius, full of ardour, were then almost as common as journalists are to-day. Among these heroes Paulinus was well fitted to stand out as a general. Justus, the fourth Archbishop of Canterbury, saw that Paulinus was the very man to be sent as bishop into the north of England, where the only signs of peace were some faint rumours of the work done at Iona by St. Columba, who had died on June 9, 597. Paulinus went north with Ethelburga, a Kentish princess, Eadbald's sister, and he was present at her marriage with Edwin, the founder of Edwin's burgh, or Edinburgh. On Easter Eve,

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EDWIN AND PAULINUS

A.D. 627, Edwin was baptized at York, in a frail wooden oratory ; and six years later, in reply to the suggestion of Paulinus, Edwin laid the foundation of a "more august basilica of stone," to be built around the timber oratory in which his baptism had taken place. To-day, in the crypt of York Minster, may be seen a rugged fragment of wall which may belong to Edwin's basilica.

For six years from their first meeting Edwin and Paulinus worked together, and in their time, says Bede, a woman might have walked from one end of the kingdom to another without harm. Paulinus had great faith in baptism, while the Northumbrians looked upon it as a rare amusement, and paddled in the rivers to their great delight, without losing their paganism. Paulinus presided at a good many ceremonies of that kind, and once, we are told, in the river Swale, at Helperby, he watched 10,000 supposed converts being immersed. Could Paulinus have followed these extemporary Christians through their lives, his belief in wholesale baptisms would have vanished.

Meanwhile troubles were brewing. Penda, king of Mercia (Midland England), joined hands with Cædwalla, the Christian king of North Wales, and the united armies made an attack on Edwin. The battle of Hatfield, near Doncaster, was fought, A.D. 633, and Edwin fell. As to Paulinus, he was driven south by sea with Ethelburga and her children, and became famous in later years as Bishop of Rochester, dying in 643-44.

Oswald succeeded Edwin, and in 634, at the

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“Heavenfield,” near Hexham, he defeated and killed Cædwalla, uniting Bernicia with Deira, and restoring the influence of Christianity. As a memorial of this great battle, Oswald not only brought to completion the stone church which Edwin had begun at York, but sent to Lindisfarne the unselfish Aidan, the greatest apostle of the north. He was quite as noble as his successor, Cuthbert, who started life as a shepherd boy of genius, to be remembered for all time as one of the clear lights in the fame of England. It was in 651, at the little timber monastery of Melrose, that Cuthbert found his true vocation, just thirteen years before the Council of Whitby was influenced by the genius of another young man, Wilfrid, then Abbot of Ripon, whose ambition was of a more worldly kind. At the same moment, also at Whitby, a new kind of minstrel appeared, whose songs were sacred and Christian; he was elderly, poor and humble; while watching over the herds at St. Hilda’s monastery, the gift of verse had come to him, and everybody listened because he sang in the language of the people. This farm labourer, Caedmon, was in songs precisely what the shepherd boy, Cuthbert, became as Prior of Lindisfarne: a teacher united to the people by racial sympathies and a humble birth.

Thus the good work went on. It gained the right men, it formed new combinations, it built oratories of wood all over Northumbria, in the glens where shepherds dwelt with their families, or in dim forests of oak and pine, where the charcoal-

PLATE XXXI

THE RUINS OF KIRKSTALL ABBEY IN
THE VALE OF THE AIRE, ABOUT THREE
MILES TO THE WEST OF LEEDS



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SCOTTISH BORDERMEN

burners made fuel for the smelting of iron ; and wherever the work of peace went, there the fear of the Scottish bordermen was found, penetrating the lives of all women with a dread so constant that it produced in them, by reaction, a fierceness even greater than their husbands'. Girl children were like wind-blown flowers, that lived for a time in the keen air, to be plucked and thrown aside. A sharp physical terror made the life of boys a training of self-defence accompanied by cruelty. The Scottish Bordermen were, indeed, the terrible giants of a desolating, tragic tale that went on for centuries ; and the Church alone dared to act brilliantly with a genius for consolation. Raids, feuds, forays, wars, violence of all kinds, flamed through the generations ; time burned always like a torch dipped in oil ; but the Church held up its emblem of peace through suffering, the crucifix, and tough priests and monks went everywhere with comfort and hope, steadfast and indomitable, as noble a body of men as ever lived.

How far-reaching the terror of the Scots became, and how long it lasted, may be illustrated by the fact that the site of Furness Abbey, Lancashire, Plate 28, was chosen because it was defended by the sea on the west, and by forests and hills between it and the Scottish raiders. Even then a watch-tower was built up high over the abbey's roof, so that a beacon might be burned there when danger threatened. A sentinel in that tower saw to the north the forest land as it gradually rose up into the defending hills of High Furness and Coniston. In the west Peel Castle could be seen dimly on its

OLD ENGLAND

islet ; and from over there, beyond Low Furness and Morecambe Bay, a reply to the Abbey's beacon could be flashed from Lancaster Castle, which Mr. Orrock illustrates in the next chapter. As a military site the position of Furness Abbey was admirable, and the Abbot's privileges were in keeping with it.

The whole district was under his authority, from the farm labourers to the mesne lords and free homagers. One and all had to swear to him an oath of fealty. Even the defence arrangements were under his control. Everybody who occupied a whole tenement had to contribute a man and a horse towards the guarding of the coast, for border service, and for other purposes of opposition to a common enemy of the king and monks.

Such was the monastery that Stephen founded, A.D. 1127, just eight years before he became king of England. He gave a liberal endowment, and so many privileges that Furness was as powerful in its own way as Fountains Abbey, Yorkshire. The masonry was a light reddish stone from quarries near at hand, but the colour changed, little by little, to a brown tint, enriched with mosses and weather stains. The valley in which Furness Abbey lay had then a suggestive name, Beckansgill, which meant the Glen of Deadly Nightshade. The annual income of this monastery must have been very large during its most prosperous days, for at the time of the Dissolution, or just before, the total rents exceeded £940 a year, and we may multiply that sum by ten to get its purchasing value at the present time. There is also reason to believe that

FURNESS ABBEY

the rents did not include the produce of the farms and woods and fisheries which the abbot kept for the daily needs of his society. The income flowed into the exchequer from Ireland and the Isle of Man, for Furness Abbey had affiliated to it no fewer than nine daughter houses. There were four in Ireland: Fermoy, Ynes (Downshire), De Surio at Lismore, and the monastery of the Holy Cross at Cashel. There were four in the north of England: Wythney, Corkonrouth, Caldre, and Swyneshead; and one at Russyn in the Isle of Man. Nothing could illustrate more clearly the widespread generalship shown by a powerful abbey in its art of self-protection, as well as in its public work.

Till late in the twelfth century the church was the principal factor in the national life. It trained the architects who designed most of the Gothic abbeys and cathedrals, and it fostered and spread abroad all the other agents of good, from the cultivation of land to the arts and crafts mentioned by St. Benedict in his decrees as far back as the sixth century. Each monastic order brought something new and fertile to the common stock of practical methods and traditions. Furness Abbey belonged to the Cistercians, whose order was founded at Citeaux in Burgundy, A.D. 1098. Their rule was sternly ardent, and a quite heroic sense of duty marked their English work, particularly at Kirkstall, Fountains, Roche, Furness, and Rievaulx, the head of all the Cistercian houses in England. Even in their relation to architecture their asceticism went hand in hand with poetry. The Cistercians were, indeed,

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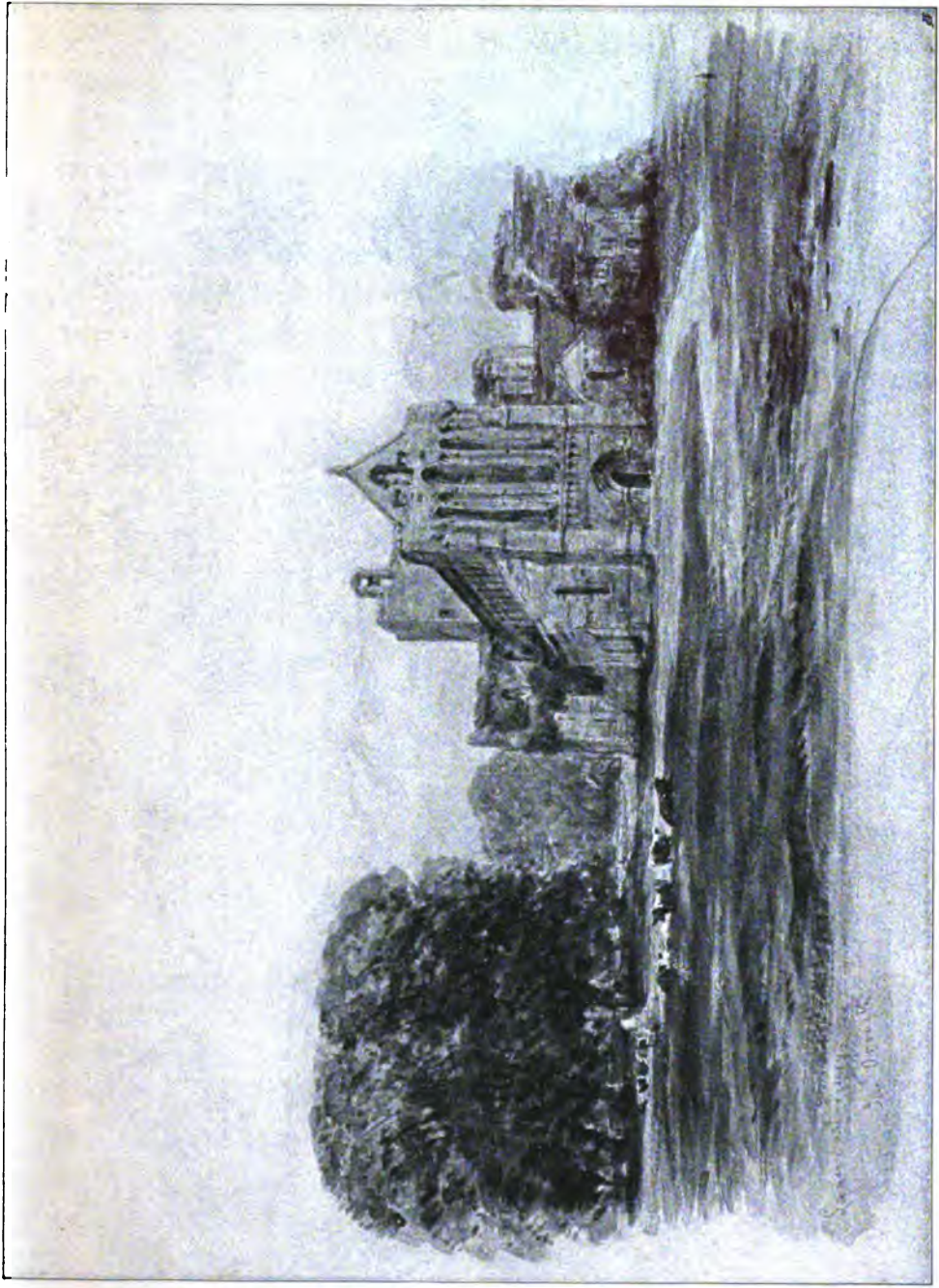
the artistic Puritans of the Gothic movement, just as the silent Carthusians were the real Puritans, for in their church building they made a display of too much severity and self-discipline. There was a haughtiness, no doubt, in the Cistercian reserve of style, but it was never frigid and repellent. The Cistercian plan was cruciform, and among its most typical features may be noted (1) the short eastern arm to the cross; (2) a reaction against the Benedictine use of aisles; (3) the division of the ground scheme into three parts by means of steps, walls, or screens; (4) a dislike for painted glass; (5) short transepts; and (6) a desire to get external height and dignity without much help from towers. Some authorities go so far as to speak of an absence of towers in Cistercian buildings of a representative kind. But the remains of Furness Abbey prove that the value of a belfry was recognised, as a means by which the whole district could be warned of dangers and kept in mind of the great festival days. What the Cistercians did not like was a form of tower that gave an air of pomp to a church building. Their ascetic bent of mind was rational and positive; this may be seen at Furness in many details, as in the fifteen-feet thickness of the walls, which shows that the monks were wide-awake to the dangers of being peaceful in an age of war.

The ruins are seen at their best from the eastern side; and although the roof and much of the masonry have vanished, the remaining part of this elevation—said to be fifty-four feet high—has something of awe in its severe simplicity. In Plate 28

THE
RUINS OF
LANERCOST
PRIORY IN
ERLAND,
NEAR
NAWORTH
CASTLE.
FOUNDED
IN THE
YEAR 1169

PLATE XXXII

RUINS OF LANERCOST PRIORY IN
ERLAND, NEAR NAWORTH CASTLE.
FOUNDED IN THE YEAR 1169



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TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

RIEVAULX ABBEY

Mr. Orrock has sketched a portion of the ruins; and with a few lines and washes he beggars the descriptive use of words, telling us more about the architecture than any writer could convey without the help of a photograph. Details are put in with the shorthand touch which architects employ, and a group of figures, just indicated, gives a scale by which the proportions of the ruined mass may be estimated.

In Plate 29, a reproduction in colour, Rievaulx Abbey is well painted in its landscape setting, at the angle of three Yorkshire glens or valleys, each of which is watered by a pleasant stream. The Rie is one of these brooks, and from it the abbey takes a part of its name, the *vaulx* being the plural of *val*, valley. This spot, so delightful at the present time, was a waste at the beginning of the twelfth century. Bit by bit it was transformed into a garden by the industry of monks, brothers of that Cistercian order first established at Citeaux, in France, A.D. 1098. For two hundred years, or thereabouts, they followed the rule of St. Benedict in all its rigour. No fewer than seventy-five Cistercian houses were built in England, always in secluded and desolate places; and the monks never failed to make their lands fertile and beautiful. Morasses were filled in, woods were cut down, heaths became farmsteads, and large stones from the hills and valleys were gathered for building purposes. This applies very particularly to the Cistercian houses in Yorkshire. Take Fountains Abbey as an example. This district, now famous for the varied charm of its

OLD ENGLAND

landscapes, was a desert when the Cistercian monks went there, in the twelfth century, and lived for a time under five or six yew trees. "The spot of ground," says Burton, "had never been inhabited unless by wild beasts, being overgrown with wood and brambles, lying between two steep hills and rocks, covered with wood on all sides, more proper for the retreat of wild beasts than the human species." Yet the Cistercians were happy to choose it as a favourable site, just as they were glad to make peace in the immense forests that surrounded Bolton, Plate 30. Rievaulx was not more enticing ; but the wilderness became a workshop, and England had soon another district reclaimed.

The monks were foreigners, sent to England by St. Bernard, abbot of Clareval. Henry I. received them with kindness, and then Sir Walter d'Espece, in the year 1131, gave them the site of Rievaulx, with money enough to build and endow their monastery. Walter d'Espece was one of the English commanders in the Battle of the Standard. As Lord of Helmsley and its dependencies, he had wealth and power ; then a great sorrow struck him, his old pursuits and ambitions grew distasteful, and he made charity his heir. This good man had one child, a lad of courage, noted as a breaker-in of fiery horses. While riding one day towards Frithby, near Kirkham, his irritable colt shied against a stone cross, fell heavily, and killed the rider. The bereaved father then made a vow that he would give what remained of his life to building monasteries. The first was the Abbey of Kirkham, between York

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RIEVAULX ABBEY

and Scarborough, on the banks of the river Derwent. Then came Rievaulx, which in due time sent out a little band of colonists to erect a house at Woburn, in Buckinghamshire. When the work at Rievaulx was put in hand, the Cistercians in England were those at Furness Abbey, in Lancashire, and those at Waverley.

Pope Alexander II., in a bull dated 1160, took Rievaulx under his protection, made it exempt from the payment of tithes, decreed that no bishop should interdict the monks, except for serious offences, and warned the people that they would be excommunicated if they harmed the brotherhood and its property. Henrys I. and II. were friendly to Rievaulx, and Walter d'Espece became one of the monks. The third abbot was Aylred, a pupil of St. Bernard, and the author of several works, "The War of the Standard," "The Life of Edward the Confessor," "David, King of Scots," and other treatises, like "The Mirror of Charity." The abbot of Rievaulx, as head of the Cistercians in England, was often called upon to act as arbitrator, but in his own house he seems to have had few difficulties.

The church, owing to the ground, stands north and south, instead of east and west. The Norman part has nearly disappeared; what remains is the purest Early English, that form of Gothic which belongs to the thirteenth century, and which, as described by Mr. Orrock, seems to be touched with Greek subtlety and refinement. This criticism is new and suggestive. It means, not that certain qualities

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were borrowed from the Greeks, but that a native taste, having much in common with Greek culture, developed a poetry of form Hellenic in some of its characteristics.

Bolton Abbey, Plate 30, is a worthy companion to Rievaulx. A pretty tradition belongs to the supposed cause of its origin. At the time of the Norman Conquest, Earl Edwin was the owner of Bolton, then known as Bodelton, or Botle-tun, so-called from the "tun" or enclosure surrounding the group of dwellings. Edwin forfeited all his estates, and in Domesday Book, compiled in 1086, Bolton was described as *terra regis*. The first grantee after this was a Norman, Robert de Romillé, whose name lives on in Romald's or Romillé's moor. He had one child, a daughter, named Cecilia; she married William de Meschines, and then founded a priory at Embsay, near Skipton. It is with Cecilia's son that tradition has long been busy. From the place of his birth, perhaps, he was called "the boy of Egremont," and legend pictures him as fond of sport, hunting in the woods between Bolton and Barden. With a forester, and two greyhounds held in leash, he passed his time merrily, and was often in that part of the glen where the river Wharfe, narrowed between rocks, forms a racing torrent known as the Strid. Any athlete could take it at a stride, and the boy did so with his dogs in leash, though the foothold was bad, being slippery with wet moss. One day, when he made his jump, the greyhounds held back; the cord tightened suddenly, throwing the lad off his

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PLATE XXXIII .

LANERCOST PRIORY, CUMBERLAND, AN
AUGUSTINE MONASTERY FOUNDED BY
ROBERT DE VALLIBUS

.







BOLTON ABBEY

balance ; a moment of suspense, a cry, a splash, and all was over.

The forester returned home dazed.

“What is good for a bootless bene?” he said to the boy’s mother.

“Endless sorrow,” the lady answered. Yet she longed that prayers should be said in the neighbourhood of the accident, so the priory near Skipton was transferred to Bolton, the mother vowing that her grief should bring hope to many a poor man’s son.

This legend deserves to be popular, though a legal document proves that the boy of Egremont was alive when the manors at Skipton and Stretton were exchanged for Bolton. He signed the charters, and ghosts were not allowed to interfere in legal matters, even then, in those times of superstition.

Here is a handful of facts which students have gathered from the *Compotus* of Bolton, a document written in a mixture of languages, Latinised English, Old French, Byzantine Greek, and Italian. When Skipton Church was finished, A.D. 1208, its windows were latticed. Glass windows were in use at Bolton in 1296 ; coal was burnt there two years earlier. The prior was fond of sport, kept hounds, and fed them on meal. The tailor seems to have worked for rich families in the neighbourhood, for he helped the monastery to pay its debts. Among other profitable industries were a lead mine and two lodges for shepherds, one at Nussay, near Knaresborough, the other at Malham. Lombard

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merchants not only bought the wool, but gave money in advance, an arrangement that the monks appreciated, their funds being always a year's income behindhand. When a royal convoy passed through Yorkshire, the carts at Bolton Abbey were sometimes pressed for the king's service, and the official purveyors did not return them unless bribes were given. This was one of the most detested grievances in the Middle Ages. The king had a right to borrow carts along the course of his journey, his privilege in this matter extending for ten leagues on each side of the road by which he or his convoy travelled. There were statutes to guard the people from tyrannous exactions, in which a rate of payment was fixed, ten pence a day for a cart with two horses, and fourteen pence for a cart with three horses. But the king's agents snapped their fingers at statutes, and held out their hands for bribes. The people complained, the Commons protested, king after king tried to make reforms, but the old abuses were still rampant when Edward III., in 1362, decreed that the royal agents, giving up "the heinous name of purveyor," should be called buyers, and pay ready money in accordance with the prices current in the market. Bolton Abbey was a victim of these thievish agents of the Crown, but all England suffered in precisely the same way.

The *Comptus* of Bolton has other interesting matters to tell us. Edward II., wishing to carry his father's heart to the Holy Land, levied sums on the monastic houses. Wolves were to be found in England during the fourteenth century; pepper,

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BOLTON ABBEY

also, and hot spices. Feasts for funerals were sometimes supplied by the abbey, not gratis, we may believe. Chimneys, though rare, were to be met with in Yorkshire. In 1345, Bolton bridge was unfinished. A serf in those days could buy his manumission by paying £4, one-third the value of a good Yorkshire horse; and this proves that horses were uncommon in the northern counties owing to wars and border raids. £12 was a very large sum in those days, equal to £144 at the present time; so the prior of Bolton used oxen instead of horses and showed common sense. His monks were great workers out of doors; they did not fatigue themselves with reading, for only three books were bought in forty years; but we learn that Peter Lombard's *Liber Sententiarum* was worth two good oxen in the fourteenth century. How many books to-day are worth two blind mice? Another detail shows how difficult it was in the Middle Ages to get a doctor. The Prior of Bolton fell seriously ill, a medical man was brought from a distance, perhaps from York, at a cost of forty shillings, or £24 in our money. It is not surprising that parish priests had to be well versed in the art of simples—plant remedies of all kinds. We do not read that the monks of Bolton were herbal doctors, but some of them observed the stars and practised alchemy, for the finance of their establishment would not keep step with the necessary expenses. One or two, more gifted than the rest, wrote verses, and gave to their vowels plenty of breadth and sound, "bare" becoming "baar,"

OLD ENGLAND

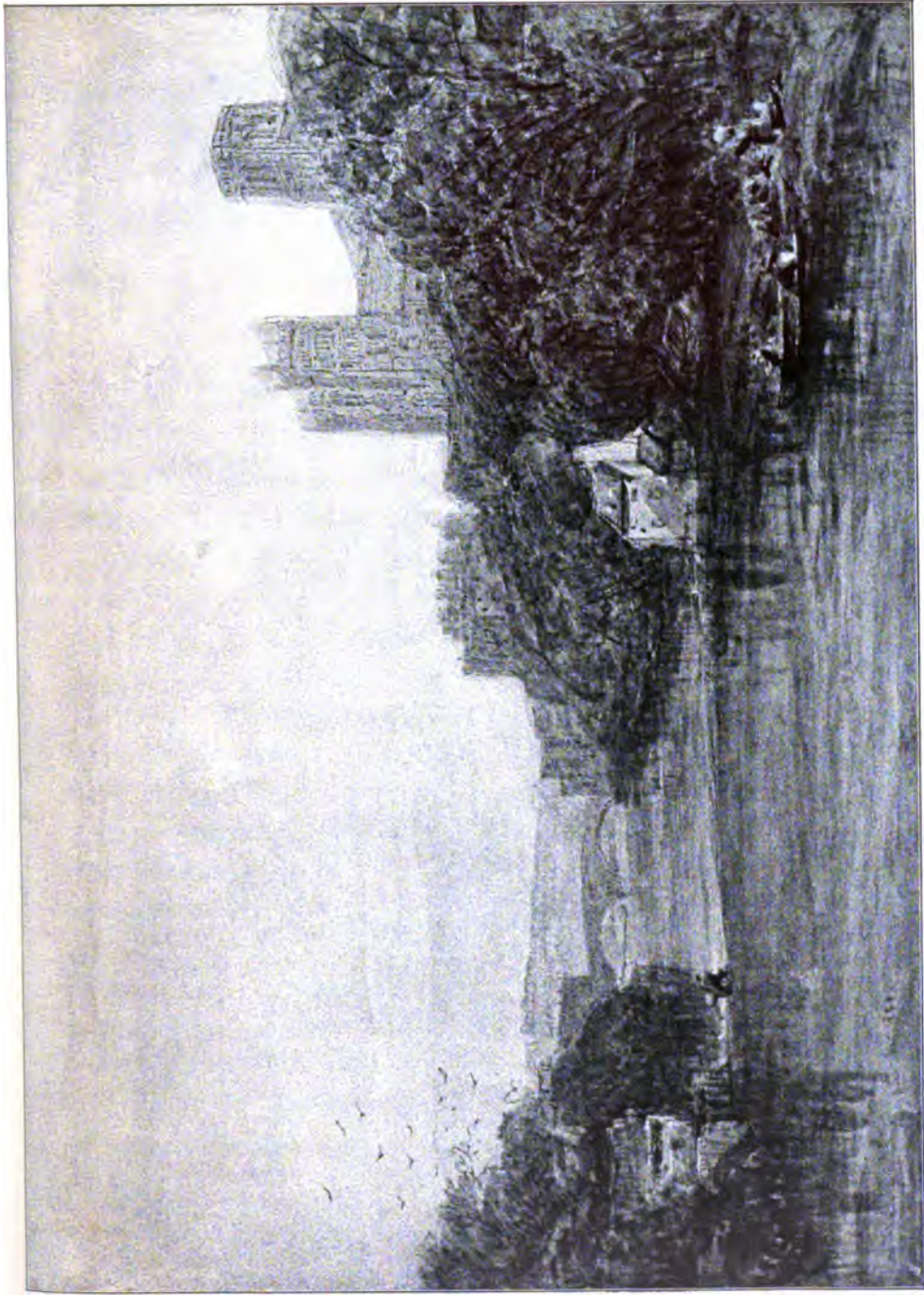
and "made" "maade." This was in the fifteenth century. The monks, again, tanned their own leather from hogs' skins, made their own cheese from ewes' milk, employed turf as well as coal and wood for fuel, and imported cotton to be burnt in their candles. Though poor they were charitable, and sometimes they turned a few honest groats and shillings by being astutely hospitable. Noblemen were willing to accept a pair of swans; and if Lady de Clifford paid a visit from Barden Tower, the prior took the matter in hand, and a feast was ready when she came. A heron was a dainty dish to set before this queen of the north.

The Cliffords, and their descendants the Claphams, were supporters of Bolton Abbey, like the Mauleverers. Each of these families had a burial-place in the church :

"There, face by face, and hand by hand,
The Claphams and Mauleverers stand."

Note the word "stand." The tradition is that the bodies were buried upright. "Upon the north side of the choir of the Claphams," says Burton, "there is a vault for setting bodies erect in." This, probably, belonged to the Claphams. It is supposed that the Cliffords were buried in the south side of the choir, while the Mauleverers preferred a chantry at the east end of the north aisle. The choice of an upright position for the bodies seems to imply that these northern families, practical even in death, wished to be fully prepared for their resurrection, without rising from a recumbent posture.

PLATE XXXIV
VIEW OF DURHAM CATHEDRAL



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THE CLIFFORDS

One Clifford was slain at Bannockburn, but his retainers brought the corpse to Bolton Abbey, at a time when the countrysides were overrun by Scotch troops, whose foraging robbed the prior of a year's rents. Another leader of the same house, "the Black-faced Clifford," fell at the Battle of Towton, with the throne of the Red Rose. The tenth Lord Clifford, usually called "The Shepherd Lord," may have been the hero of that exquisite ballad "The Nut-Brown Maid;" the choice lies between him and his son, "Madcap Harry," who was brought up with Henry VIII., and whose wild pranks were famous everywhere. Tradition says that Madcap Harry fought as a nameless adventurer at Flodden Field, wearing on his helm the golden braid of Earl Percy's daughter, Margaret, whom he had met in secret; that he turned the tide of battle, reconciled himself with his father, and won Margaret and his spurs. Margaret was his second wife, and many think of her as the Nut-Brown Maid. Harry Clifford was born in 1493, the ballad was published in Arnold's Chronicle in 1521, the date of the marriage with Margaret Percy was about 1516. Another tradition relates how Madcap Harry made an attack upon Bolton Abbey, accompanied by a set of rowdy fellows in disguise. The monks were in bed, but Prior Moyne was up and awake, reading scrolls in his cell, when Harry knocked at the gate, and begged hospitality as a wayworn pilgrim. The Prior made him welcome:

"And Bolton's gate shall ope to thee,
In Christian love and courtesy."

OLD ENGLAND

But—

“The pilgrim held his sturdy stave
Within the opening door,
Then, turning, whuted loud and shrill,
Till answering from the woodland hill,
Rose laughter's frantic roar ;
And troop on troop came hurrying down,
But ill-concealed in palmer's gown,
With staff and scallop shell :
Then wilder still the chiding broke,
Till ilk affrighted friar woke,
Within the peaceful dell.”

The abbey was stormed with success :

“‘Now, Prior Moyne, we must away
To the greenwood ere break of day,
And thou shalt with us go !’
The priest is loath, but yield he must,
Or pay one hundred marks on trust,
With mickle wrath and woe.
The bag is brought, the coin is told,
And doubly curst the sinners bold,
Who robbed the Church and filch'd her gold !
Then swift as lightning through the wood,
Ilk losel gains the solitude.”

This ballad was written by W. H. Leatham, and its subject brings us to the time of Henry VIII. On June 11, 1540, Bolton was dissolved ; three years later the estates were granted to Henry Clifford ; and this family held them till 1635, when they passed by marriage to Richard, the first Earl of Burlington. In 1748, Burlington's daughter and heiress, Charlotte, married the Duke of Devonshire, and carried the demesnes of Bolton into his family.

Last of all, there remained in charge at Bolton, in

KIRKSTALL ABBEY

the year 1553, eleven pensions for the last surviving monks of this abbey. Christopher Leeds got £6 13s. 4d., like William Wylkes and Thomas Casteley; while the others received £5 6s. 8d. each.

We pass on to Kirkstall Abbey, Plate 31, in the Vale of the Aire, about three miles to the west of Leeds. The ruins are particularly notable, because they show, in a very peculiar and rare degree, the character of Norman architecture when it first began to move in the direction of the pointed style. This does not apply to the remnant of the tower—a feature very much later in date, not older than the beginning of the sixteenth century; though too heavy for its foundation, the tower remained whole till January 27, 1779, when the greater part of it was blown down. The rest of the church must be studied on the spot to be appreciated. The ruins cover 340 feet of ground from north to south, and 445 feet from east to west. Apart from some changes of later dates, and in two or three of the windows, the church marks a definite period. It was begun during the last two years of Stephen's reign, the foundation being laid in 1152; it was nearly finished when Henry the Second, dying at Chinon, in 1189, muttered in his delirium: "Shame on a conquered king." Here and there, as in the slightly pointed arches of the choir and transept, the Norman manner, cold and massive, thaws a little into a more liquid style; while outside, facing the winds, the transitional traits are less clearly marked. The doorways and porticoes are uniformly Norman,

OLD ENGLAND

and show in their want of size an obedient respect for the keen Yorkshire weather. The windows look small, and are small, in comparison with the total bulk of masonry.

Why was it that the art of window design advanced very slowly in church architecture, and in houses also? We read, for instance, how Abbot Sampson, of Bury St. Edmunds, in the year 1182, while staying at a grange, or manor-house, on his lands, was in danger of being burnt with the farm buildings, as the windows were so narrow that he could not pass through them. At that time windows were still unglazed; some latticed, and others covered with a transparent cloth or blind, through which a dim light passed. Hinged shutters closed up the window-holes at night. When this custom was in vogue, glass cups were employed among the rich. Glass was expensive, we may be sure, and the infrequency of its use in architecture may be attributed partly to that cause, and partly also, perhaps, to the ease with which boys could shoot their arrows through it from a distance without being seen. There may have been some question of ethics in the choice of small windows, because moralists of the early times warned young girls against the temptations that windows brought into their lives. In the early English "Ancren Riewle," or Rule of Nuns, the writer says: "My dear sisters, love your *thurles*"—holes through the wall, windows—"as little as you may, and let them be small, and the parlour's least and narrowest; let the cloth in them be twofold, black cloth, the cross white

PLATE XXXV
THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF RIPON







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WINDOWS

within and without." Also, "If any man become so mad and unreasonable that he put forth his hand towards the window-cloth (*the thurl cloth*), shut the window quickly and leave him." Mothers probably said as much to their daughters. But we cannot suppose that the size of windows was determined by this one consideration, for they were small in churches as well as in private houses. The original meaning of the word window—"wind eye"—suggests fear of draught, a serious thing indeed at a time when it was almost impossible to heat a northern church in winter. This fact is important, and should be considered in relation to the costliness of glass in early periods, and to the breakage that glass windows invited when boys were archers at an early age. We must remember also the tyranny of castle architecture and the social customs that then prevailed. Light was not valued in churches because there was little of it in homes. The fashion of wearing armour was alone enough to make men of rank careless in this matter. Norman churches, like Saxon, were castles raised to God's honour; and in all subsequent alterations the aim was to get rid of the fortress traits of character. Thus, for example, the windows at Kirkstall Abbey are large in comparison with those of an earlier period; but we know how small they are when we contrast them with later achievements in painted glass.

Yorkshire historians—Whitaker, Churton, Miall, and others—prove that the early Abbots of Kirkstall had many troubles, probably because they were bad men of business, like the Abbots of Bury

OLD ENGLAND

St. Edmunds before Sampson started his reign of thirty-three splendid years in 1179. Alexander, the first Abbot of Kirkstall, was then in office, his rule lasting from 1152 to 1182. When Alexander died, and Ralph Hageh was put in authority, the monastery began to drift into a very bad way. The first blow came from the King, Henry II., who seized the grange of Micklethwaite, which the monks valued more than any other. In despair, and wishing to conciliate the King, the abbot sent Henry a valuable manuscript of the Gospels, as well as a chalice enriched with gems; but his Majesty kept the Gospels, the chalice, and the grange. Meantime the monks broke loose from discipline, and accused their chief of having robbed them. In 1191 Hageh went back to Fountains Abbey, the parent house, and Lambert was elected to fill his place at Kirkstall. Poor Lambert! Among the lands which the abbey had received from its founder, Henry de Lacy, was a farm, and this was claimed by a knight in the vicinity, Richard of Elland, who seems to have had justice on his side. At last a compromise was effected; Elland made an exchange, giving Kirkstall a village—that is, a manor. When Lambert took over his new property, he turned out the inhabitants, quite forgetting their Yorkshire character; so the peasants declared war, and burned the farm, and three lay brothers perished with it. Then Pontefract Castle interfered, and the disturbance flickered out. De Lacy caught the offenders and forced them not only to sue for mercy, but to pay compensation for

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KIRKSTALL ABBEY

their misdeeds. The fourth Abbot, Turgesius, drank little, ate less, and thought it a saintly thing to have bare feet in cold weather; during the celebration of mass he wept profusely, and spoilt his vestments. After nine years of this asceticism, he returned to Fountains, but not to renew his tears.

In the reign of Edward I. (1272-1307) Kirkstall was very much in debt, and not only in debt, but positively bankrupt. The exercise of "flying kites" had been tried for some time, lifting the whole convent in the air. The foundations were gone, and the creditors were Jews and money-lenders. The abbot, more desperate than wise, sent a deputation to the King, asking leave to suspend payment. Edward I. was then at St. Sever, in Gascony. The deputation ran short of money, and wrote home in a panic, begging for relief at any cost, "even although it be taken from the sacred oblations, that we may at least be able to purchase necessaries while we are labouring in your vineyard. In this we earnestly entreat you not to fail; for, in truth, we never were so destitute before."

Those were evil days, but they passed away. Kirkstall Abbey, in the year 1381, owned 216 draught oxen, 160 cows, 152 yearlings and bullocks, 90 calves, 4000 sheep and lambs, and a sufficiency of monks; while the debts were not more than £160. That was a big sum in those days, but the value of the live stock alone placed the abbey in a secure position. At the time of the Dissolution, according to Dugdale, the annual income was worth £329 2s. 11d.

OLD ENGLAND

Lanercost Priory, the subject of Plates 32 and 33, was a place of refuge in the tumultuous Border Country, built, probably, of materials taken from the Roman Wall. The site is in the neighbourhood of Naworth Castle, Cumberland, near the river Irthing, and in a delicious valley running for about three miles between the priory and Naworth. The foundation goes back to the time of Richard I., when a body of Augustine Canons was established there by the Lord of Gilesland, Robert de Vallibus. Lanercost Priory received many royal visitors, willingly or reluctantly. Edward I. made his home there on three occasions; with Queen Eleanor in 1280, then in 1300, and again in 1306, just a year before his death. The Chronicle attributed to Matthew of Westminster has a curious little story to tell concerning the second visit. The King, it appears, marched an army into Scotland, slaying more than four hundred; but the Archbishop of Canterbury arrived, and told Edward that the Scotch had "submitted themselves to the Pope's protection," and that the Apostolic See interfered in their behalf. He was "not to presume any further to make war upon the Scots;" "and when the King heard this, he returned to England."

However, the Scotch had burned Lanercost Priory in 1296; and some years later, in 1311, Robert Bruce went there, put several monks under arrest, and turned the convent upside down. At the end of the third day he freed his prisoners, and left the neighbourhood. David II. was at Lanercost in 1346—he and his troops. It took some

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PLATE XXXVI

**ULVERSCROFT PRIORY IN CHARNWOOD
FOREST, LEICESTERSHIRE. FOUNDED
IN THE TWELFTH CENTURY**





1

2

LANERCOST PRIORY

time to recover from that visit. Just before this event, or shortly after it, a man of interesting character became Prior. Thomas de Hextoldesham was fond of dogs, and a passion for hunting made him so notoriously human that the Bishop of Carlisle spoke up at the time of his election, and insisted upon his taking an oath never to attend at public sports, and never again to keep a large pack of hounds. He was a despot, this Bishop of Carlisle, perhaps too old to hunt himself, for this sport was one which a good many leaders of the Church followed. It will be remembered also that our earliest printed book on Hunting, Hawking, Heraldry, and Fishing—the Boke of St. Albans—is attributed, justly, I believe, to a Prioress of the fifteenth century, Juliana Berners, of Sopwell Nunnery, near St. Albans. For the rest, Lanercost had dwindled to a shred of its former self by the time of the Dissolution, when the Prior had only seven canons. In 1543 the Lanercost estate was granted to Thomas Dacre, afterwards Sir Thomas, and his male heirs; there was not an heir when James Dacre died in 1716, so the estate reverted to the Crown. To-day, I believe, it is held from the Crown by the Earl of Carlisle.

Among the cathedral churches of England there are two—Durham and Worcester—that appeal to the imagination as watch-towers of the Faith, set up high above a river, and screened by trees. Durham,

“Grand and vast, that stands above the Wear,”

was beloved by Sir Walter Scott; and all the

OLD ENGLAND

landscape-painters of the English school have drawn it, finding ever something new in the charm of its familiar position. In Plate 34 Mr. Orrock has chosen a warm, misty day, and his picture has a delicacy and grace to which justice cannot be done in a reproduction, now that the Turner school of engravers has died out.

The main points to be studied and remembered in the architecture of Durham Cathedral are four in number :

1. It is of Norman descent, built between the years 1096 and 1133. The work of this first period has given the cathedral the finest Norman nave in England, at once massive and majestic, with pillars almost as wide as the openings of the arcaded masonry, and enriched with fluting and quaint zigzag channels.

2. In keeping with this nave, and yet marking a splendid transition, there is the eastern transept, known as the Chapel of the Nine Altars. A masterpiece of the Early English period (thirteenth century), it ought to be studied side by side with the Cathedral of Dunblane, perhaps the most exquisite example of the same style. Will the world ever admit that English Gothic is the best, the least troubled with an excess of detail, and the most reserved in power, in clear beauty of form, in vast structural harmonies? Deep down in the Anglo-Celtic temperament there is something that produces a finer breed of style than you will find elsewhere. Religious painting and sculpture are exceptions, no doubt; but we need not fear comparison in other

DURHAM CATHEDRAL

arts. A certain look of high birth is the chief and distinguishing characteristic of all good British work. You may see it in village cottages, where the styles are of local growth, native and home-bred. As to the great cathedrals, like Durham and Lincoln, they prove that the English genius was a rare colonist, a magical user and transformer of alien styles.

3. There is at Durham an impressive example of the most successful feature in English Gothic—a great central tower, 216 feet high, at once so elegant and so masculine that it could not be bettered.

4. Durham, like Lincoln and Ripon, Plates 27 and 35, has western towers; and this applies to Canterbury, to York and Wells, and to Lichfield (where there are spires also).

Durham is a cathedral of the Old Monastic Foundation; that is to say, it was governed by the regular or monastic clergy at the time of the Dissolution, and therefore its management was reconstituted, a chapter of secular canons taking the place of the monastic priesthood. Of this foundation, there are thirteen cathedrals (unlucky in number even now): Canterbury, Durham, Worcester, Gloucester, Norwich, Ely, Carlisle, Rochester, Winchester, Oxford, Chester, Bristol, and Peterborough, Plate 2. Then there are cathedrals of the Old Foundation: that is, from about the thirteenth century to the time of Henry VIII. they were served by the secular priesthood, and were therefore unaffected by the changes brought about by the dissolution of the monasteries. To this foundation the following cathedrals belong: St. Paul's,

OLD ENGLAND


London, York, Wells, Lichfield, Chichester, Salisbury, Hereford, Exeter, and Lincoln, Plate 27. The cathedrals of the New Foundation are those churches to which bishops have been appointed since the break-up of the old monastic system. Some were parochial churches, like Wakefield, Newcastle, Truro, Manchester, and St. Albans; while Ripon, like Southwell, was an old collegiate church.

Ripon Cathedral is the shrine of St. Wilfrid, as Durham is the sanctuary of St. Cuthbert. Ripon is the subject of Plate 35, a charming picture in every way, full of light and movement and sympathy. Here, as at Lichfield, the cathedral stands on the foundation of a Norman building, and preserves a few relics of the first structure. Ripon has a central tower of no great height, like Southwell, very different from the skylark tower of St. Albans.

Like Southwell, too, Ripon is very noted for its early English workmanship, the western façade being a perfect specimen of that noble style. It was restored by Scott, who gave proof of sound judgment, unlike Wyatt, who at Durham, and elsewhere, earned for himself the name of Wyatt the Destroyer.

The last monastic illustration to this chapter, Ulverscroft Priory, near Leicester, Plate 36, is another good example of English Gothic; and the priory itself has great interest, being among the few religious houses that kept their rule unblemished to the time of Henry VIII. It was certainly suppressed in 1534, the estates being given then to Thomas Manners, Earl of Rutland; but the reports

PLATE XXXVII
TYPE OF COUNTRY PARISH CHURCH
HAMPTON LUCY IN WARWICKSHIRE





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ULVERSCROFT PRIORY

which Henry had received of the discipline of Ulverscroft were so good, that on June 19, 1534, he issued a letter in which the priory was virtually refounded.

Ulverscroft, within eight miles of Leicester and six of Mount Sorrel, was built in a clearing of the Old Charnwood Forest, which Sir Walter Scott, in "Ivanhoe," re-peopled with its ancient vanished life and trees. There, in the thick of the forest, surrounded by outlaws of all kinds, the priory grew up. Some authorities say that the first inmates were three friar-hermits, who settled there in the time of Henry II. (1154-1189), owing to the friendship of Robert Blanchmains, Earl of Leicester. But Nichols has proved, by printing a bull of Pope Alexander III., that Robert Bosser was the founder, at a date earlier than 1140. Bosser had a grandchild, Margaret di Quincy, the daughter of the reputed founder, Robert Blanchmains, and from her the priory received certain estates at Richull and Bissopehul. At a much later date, in the reign of Edward II. (1307-1327), Ulverscroft seems to have been united to the Priory of Chawley, by consent of the Earl of Winchester. At all times the canons of Ulverscroft seem to have shown in their lives that just harmony between speech and action which made English monasticism so justly famous during its noble days, when its leaders said to themselves :

"Ours, at any rate, is not the time
For stringing words with satisfaction ;
What's wanted now's the silent rhyme
'Twixt upright will and downright action."

OLD ENGLAND

That was a secret of success even when the Saxons had to be melted by the fire of speech before they could be moulded by the hand of action and experience. But there is a dark side also to the history of English monasticism. The good in it dwindled into wealth and tyrannical power; those gifts of the spirit that turned men into saints were all swallowed up by worldly prestige and success. Then followed a secret revolt against the discipline of celibacy. "The Divinity," said Goethe, "works in the becoming and changing, not in the become and the fixed." This truth explains the rise and fall of English monasticism.

The brotherhoods of monks were subject to that mysterious law of the tides which has ever been felt by all things human. In obedience to that law, their enthusiasm ebbed and flowed, till at last they were caught up and shattered into bits by the political hurricane known as the Great Pillage of the Monasteries. Some persons are never tired of playing the part of scavengers among the records of religious houses, just as though the Great Pillage could be excused or explained by that means. The monasteries were suppressed for three reasons, and the least important of the three was the senile decay or arrest of progress from which the monastic orders suffered. The most active reason was the ever-increasing extravagance of Henry VIII., which meant an ever-increasing need of money. Next in importance was the fact that the monastic houses owned far too much of the best land in the country.

Their united property, it was estimated, formed

ENGLISH MONASTICISM

one-third of all the land of the kingdom. This may be over-stated, but there can be no doubt that their estates were vastly too big. The monasteries were no longer needed as teachers of agriculture; and Christianity could not fare well under a system of religion that accumulated land as misers hoarded gold. Also, the common weal of national politics was threatened by the monks' ambitions and vested interests.

William the Conqueror showed a great deal of political common sense when he prevented his nobles from forming large compact fiefs in England; and one regrets always that he did not reveal the same wisdom in his policy towards the monks. He would not have been wrong had he put a stern limit to the amount of land that a monastery could own or rent, for he would then have checked that passion for wealth and that lavish hospitality which turned the ruling thought of monks from unworldly goodness to practical and mundane ambition. The monasteries became free hotels, with a management so vast and so complex that hard men of business were needed, not men of prayer and self-sacrifice.

Very difficult and dangerous was the problem which Henry VIII. inherited. A wiser man would have touched it with the greatest care, leaving his successors to attend to it little by little, in a piecemeal fashion; but Henry's need of money urged him on, and with the self-confidence of a despot, he unmade and made history at a terrific speed. The Church, the founder of the nation, was cut in two, and one of the halves has shown since then

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a peculiar brittleness, falling one by one into so many fragments that we have at the present time the separate charities of about three hundred modified Protestant creeds. If unity be strength, what can this want of union mean? If the Thames could be made to flow in three hundred diverging channels, what kind of boat could bring the East to the port of London? The river of faith should flow in one channel with the waters of many tributaries; then it is national, whether with mud banks or without them.

However, the pre-Reformation times had one glorious harvest of a posthumous nature, an aftermath of greatness which the whole world has taken from England, while Englishmen themselves have failed to trace it home to its original cause and source. I refer to the Shakespearian drama, which owed its appeal and its support to that love of pageants and emotional display which the Catholic Church had fostered from the earliest times, and for which a strenuous dislike was entertained by all Puritans who grew up to manhood with Shakespeare. In the "Anatomy of Abuses," by Philip Stubbes, and in other writings of the sixteenth century, as in those by Gosson, we see how rapidly the wave of Puritanism gathered strength, till at last—only a few years after Shakespeare's death—it was powerful enough to submerge the drama. The greatest of all Englishmen lived at precisely the right time, when Puritanism was too young to rob him of a public. Had he appeared forty years later, his plays and their value in the nation's life

PLATE XXXVIII

TYPE OF MANOR CHURCH AT BURY
IN SUSSEX ON THE RIVER ARUN





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CHURCH AND STAGE

would have been impossible. As it was, he was able to sum up the whole genius of his race and country; and by so doing, he and his fellow dramatists worked the Renaissance, doing for England the very thing which was done elsewhere by great religious painters and sculptors. Shakespeare did not portray the Madonna and Child, but his good women are radiant shapes—Madonnas of the British Home. To love them is to better ourselves.

The life of emotion that produced Shakespeare has begun once more to hold sway in England. Puritanism has been in a state of thaw during the last forty years; and now it melts rapidly into the old-time enthusiasm, producing a condition of mind friendly to the old-time religion. The Protestantism that succeeds best to-day is full of vehemence and show, the Salvation Army. Does it not recall to memory the Coming of the Friars?

Where the ruined abbeys now stand, almost forgotten, monks may again chant their offices, but with a new spirit. Though born of Puritan stock, I feel in the air something that preceded the Reformation. Our race has no half-moods when it begins to pass from one ideal to another; and there can be no doubt that Puritanism will soon be dead as a national influence. Will the spirit of St. Columba return to the north? Will the enthusiasm of St. Augustine reappear in the south? Is England's religion in the future to be a compound of the best doctrines which Christian faiths have formed during their passage through the centuries?

CHAPTER IV

HOW THEY BUILT IN OLD ENGLAND

AN American visitor tells me in a letter that he is puzzled by certain questions connected with English rural districts. "A good part of England," he writes, "ought to be put under glass, like Mr. Chamberlain's orchids, or something else political and rare. I go into a rural neighbourhood, and find myself in a museum of ancient architecture, out in the open in all weather, and crying to us for a roof to cover it. I see remnants of old castles, ruined abbeys, perhaps a cathedral, many old churches within sight of each other, and humbler old buildings by the score, cottages and farms—a thing to bewilder you or me. Then I read a bit, and think, and pass from bewilderment to blank astonishment. Your King Stephen built a pretty little parcel of castles—eleven hundred and more, as though his country had a population of forty million bandits, instead of rather less than three million ordinary folk, the bulk being farmers, labourers, and artisans. Each village, so I read, was a manor with sixty or eighty inhabitants, headed by a lord or his bailiff; and this handful of people had a fine church, large

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ENGLISH LANDSCAPES

enough for six or seven villages. The manor next door, so to speak, has another church of the same size; and in your county of Northants I've done five or six old churches in one easy day's walk, and returned home dumbfounded. Bless me, it's the most natural thing in the world that your English country should look so *good*, full of rest and gentleness; each field, so I tell myself, has a prayer to say, and means to repeat it all day long in fine warm weather. Perhaps your country landscapes were turned into pretty nuns by the dissolution of the monasteries; and hence the piety of their look, and the faithful way in which they cling to the ruined abbeys. To me, mind you, it's very surprising. How was all this architecture put up and kept up by such a tiny population? Where did the money come from, and how was it spent? What was the business method, or did sheer waste and madness rule in these matters? I can't rest till these questions are answered. Let me see the masons lay their courses, tell me how architects were treated, show me how the work was done. Good day."

Perhaps the majority of English people are as puzzled as my American correspondent, particularly in those parts of the country where the wealth of the early times was produced by sheep farms. At a first glance, no doubt, there is something very astonishing in the fact that abbeys, churches, cathedrals, castles, were built and rebuilt, altered and re-altered, as though money came down with the rain; and yet, lavish as their building enterprise seems, our

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ancestors were not thriftless. Their ideals differed from ours, and their work was in keeping with their ideals, but in business method they were thorough, careful, economical. Masterpieces in architecture were made at a trifling cost as compared with our own wild adventures in public buildings. Where the money came from for churches and cathedrals is a question dealt with in Chapter III., so we will pass on at once to the economical methods, and illustrate them in all their principal phases. The tiny population of the Middle Ages certainly excelled our own time in architecture, just as our railway system, when its utility is considered in relation to its total cost of production and maintenance, was excelled by the Roman roads, built by the Legionaries when peace turned their thoughts to politics and troublesome agitation. The building of roads was a form of Roman discipline; it kept the troops out of mischief, and produced at the lowest possible cost in money the highest possible benefits of a public kind. Compare this with the fabulous sums "invested" in our railways, and you will see the difference between the Roman economy and our own business methods—a difference so marked that we now get what we need at a gigantic cost in private speculation to serve public purposes. The system of economy in mediæval England had many points in common with the Roman system; and that is why its work was cheap as well as good.

We preach economy, but we cannot practise it. That art has passed from business into school books ;

INFLUENCE OF MONEY

and its efficiency has decreased with the purchasing value of money. That is the first point to be remembered. When a farmer earned less than five pounds by a year's work and enterprise, he knew to a half-farthing the full cost of money; and as farming was the occupation of all classes, directly or indirectly, the value of land and its produce determined the way in which every mind in the country considered financial questions. Earnings represented by small sums, even when those sums buy all the necessaries of life, have an effect on the mind very similar to that which bandages have on weak limbs: they give strength, and check strained efforts.

Decrease by twelve the purchasing value of wages, and raise the wages by twelve, from four to forty-eight shillings a week, and you will increase among that class of workers the readiness with which money is spent. This has happened in England among all classes since the mediæval times; and the same thing goes on to-day in America and Australia. The purchasing value of money is less there than with us, the average wage is higher in proportion, and economy is less evident.

Mediæval Englishmen were careful in money matters because they thought in little sums, not in five pound-notes, nor in guineas by the week. They valued silver much more than work, but each took care that the work done for him should be more valuable than the silver paid for it. That was the whole secret of their success in business.

In so far as church buildings are concerned, we

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must remember always that in many instances, as in that of Ely Cathedral, places of worship preceded their congregations; and often, as in the case of Ely, the town which grew up around a church was always dwarfed by its parent. That fact did not trouble the citizens. Their cathedral was a monument to their Faith; it attracted pilgrims and helped to support the city; its size, too, was a stimulus to municipal pride and self-respect.

With a manor church the case was different. Often it was built by the lord of the manor at his own cost, the patronage of the advowson remaining as a legacy in his hands to be passed on with his estate to the heir-at-law. In such cases, no doubt, the style and size of the church would be influenced by the lord's relations with the bishop of his diocese, and by his own ambitions and personal character; and hence it says much for our ancestors that meanness seldom (if ever) found its way into any ecclesiastical building. There must have been a large generosity in minds that took so much pleasure in ample proportions, in exquisite detail, and in general thoroughness of craftsmanship. Wittingly or unwittingly, the past built for our needs much more than for its own.

Still, money was never wasted. There were no middlemen to raise the cost of production, and to make each detail of work as complicated as a manorial balance sheet. The relation of a master with his men was exceedingly direct. This may account for the fact that mediæval artisans and labourers were rather better paid than our own, but

MODERN ARCHITECTS

it reduced other building costs to at least a third of our current rates. At present, when a church has to be built, the employer is unknown to most of his workmen ; he is a big contractor with large offices in a town, so busy that he sits at his office table dictating letters all day long, or giving directions by telephone concerning a hundred different jobs. His mind is never fixed on one scheme of work. *That* he leaves to his agents and overlookers, the men who represent the real employer in all personal dealings with the craftsmen. Further, the contractor and his deputies need as much tact and diplomacy as the British ambassadors at Paris and Berlin. Middlemen of influence have to be used for a great many details of business, faults have to be found with powerful manufacturers of this and that, and some architect of note, from whom other jobs may be obtained, has to be managed with skill. This may be very difficult, partly because an architect is worried by a number of large schemes at the same time, and partly because his livelihood depends on a business custom which may raise suspicion in those who employ him. He receives a commission on the cost of production, an absurd thing from any standpoint of sound finance. If you call in an architect to design a church or a house, you naturally wish to get the very best work at the lowest possible price ; and yet your trustee in this matter, your architect, is asked by the custom of his profession to lower his own receipts by reducing your cost. No position could be more anomalous than that. If the cost of production is to determine

OLD ENGLAND

the money value of an architect's genius and experience, why should he toil to be economical? It is clear that your faith in him cannot rest on a sound business footing; you have confidence in his personal character, you trust him as a man; and relations of this kind may become at any moment unsatisfactory in the restless excitement and depression that accompany all building operations. The criticisms of a friend may cause you to think that too much is being paid for the work actually done. Thus, to be brief, practical architecture as carried on to-day is little likely to encourage private clients, or to vie with the methods of the Middle Ages.

Nothing could have been simpler and more direct than the old-time relations between an architect and his patron. Not unfrequently, of course, a patron did not appear, because the architect, as in the case of Alan de Walsingham at Ely, was a member of the conventual body, and so on the spot, possessed of all necessary local knowledge, and responsible only to his order. But patrons were to be met with. In the fifteenth century, for example, the abbot of Bury St. Edmunds wanted an architect for some special purpose. He did not ask one to prepare plans and then make a succession of hurried journeys to watch the masons' progress, leaving a clerk of works to do the daily and hourly supervision. Utilitarian principles of this kind, at odds with common sense, would have startled the good abbot more than an outbreak of independence among his monks. His need was an architect, and not a

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PLATE XXXIX
VIEW OF RADCLIFFE-ON-SOAR,
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE





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A MEDIÆVAL ARCHITECT

fragment of an architect's time and experience. Therefore he engaged one by the year, and, in accordance with the custom of the time, struck a bargain, neat and clear-cut. There was a provision also to stop the æsthetic temperament from taking holidays under the plea that it did not feel fit, no inspiration being at hand this beautiful sunny morning. The abbot's architect and his assistant also might, if they wished, be "slack"; but if they were absent from work for more than two days in each quarter of the year, they would be fined at a fixed rate. Then, as regards living and salary, the architect and his man would be boarded and lodged, each would have a livery by the year, and the two together would receive £10 in money as the annual fee. The architect would take his meals in state, sitting at the same table with the abbot's gentleman-in-waiting; while his assistant would live like a yeoman, taking his meals at the upper servants' table.

This arrangement is quite startling to an architect of to-day. £10 a year for two men, and one of them an architect clever enough to work at the splendid monastery of Bury St. Edmunds, which in those days had risen so high that its chief was called a Lord Abbot! That £10 in modern money would be worth twelve times the sum—£120. And then the allowance of only eight week-days in the year for change of air, all the other week-days, with exception of the great festivals, to be given to hard business. Surely the creative faculties and the tired eyes need more holidays than that? Switzerland

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or the seaside is called in to-day as a restorative. My Lord Abbot had no faith in holidays. He was a man of his time, when artisans missed only eighteen days' work in a year, including feast days: six at Christmas, three at Easter, three at Whitsuntide, and six others spread over the year. The abbot knew this, and his architect had no artificial standing of any kind; he was just an excellent artisan, superior in degree, but not in kind, to the head mason, who received four shillings a week. The mason, as the saying went, "could make his plot" for any work that he undertook. In other words, he could design a plan, was an architect in his own way, versed in traditional methods and traditions. He differed from the genuine architect in the higher planes of constructive design, where invention and mathematics went hand in hand together. For instance, he could not throw a vast dome over an open space.

That architects were appreciated for their genius there can be no doubt, but they were not exalted. They did not rule with a high hand, nor make fortunes out of the construction of one big building. The Church, indeed, had produced so many of the leading masters that the Abbot of Bury St. Edmunds would regard "the craft" as belonging mainly to religion, and therefore subject to conventional discipline. Hence in great measure the stern business arrangement that he deemed necessary when he engaged his architect. Whatever we may think of this transaction, architecture was at its highest in England when its masters

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ECONOMICS

worked under conditions much harder than our own, and often buried themselves in their creations, leaving no record even of their names.

Another interesting fact is the cheapness of all intellectual work at a time when education and learning are supposed to have been uncommon. Whether common or the reverse, ability could be hired at a cost which would be thought ridiculously small at the present time. There was nothing at all unusual in the small money fee paid by the Abbot of Bury St. Edmunds for a year's labour in architecture. Lawyers, scribes, copyists, illuminators, received poor payment; and Thorold Rogers points out that the sum of only fifty shillings a year each was given to the three chaplains whom Henry III. maintained at his hunting lodge of Woodstock. "An advocate, retained to defend a will, is remunerated by 6s. 8d., and the fees to attorneys were very small. I have found one fee paid for conducting a case, which is 6s. 8d." Meantime the domestics in large houses got their board, their lodging, a suit of livery by the year, and good wages in money, ranging from forty shillings a year to thirteen and fourpence.

We have seen thus far that the economics of the Middle Ages had the following points :

1. Hand labour and domestic service were well paid.
2. Inventive skill and brain work could be hired at a low price.
3. Holidays were few in a year.
4. Sternness in matters of business ruled every-

OLD ENGLAND

where, even an architect of position being fined if he missed more than two days' work in three months.

The brain of the country, directly or indirectly, was the Church. Each monastery or cathedral had its school ; scribes, copyists, illuminators, lawyers, authors, architects, were often churchmen, and the universities found their *alma mater* in the same influence. Learning to the Church was a detail, and in all matters of detail the Church was carefully exact and frugal when estimating its value in money. Unless we keep this fact constantly in mind, we cannot understand the cheapness of brain stuff during the Middle Ages. The Church, no doubt, in large issues touching its social prestige and its political standing, became lavish, practising many kinds of compromise and diplomacy ; but each detail of this prodigal expenditure was handled with masterly skill. The sum total of expense was vast ; the items in the account were low.

On the other hand, when the national mind got secularised through and through, the value of its brain work in money began to be regulated by public competition, with the result that an architect may earn to-day £34,000 by his labour on one great building. No mediæval architect ever received the twelfth part of that sum, which would have been its equivalent. Even to suggest it as possible would have been looked upon as madness. The whole cost of building the Bell Tower at Merton College, Oxford, between May 1448 and May 1450, was under £145, including £6 6s. *od.* for

PLATE XL

**THE VALLEY OF THE YORE, YORKSHIRE,
WITH BOLTON CASTLE IN THE DISTANCE**



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BUILDING COSTS

three cranes. When splendid work could be done at that price, architects had no chance of earning a fortune out of a single job.

In brief, modern competition has had two effects: it has caused the wages of artisans and labourers to sink below the mediæval standard, if we estimate money values by the cost of food, clothes, and rent; while in all the high forms of brain work it has raised in a wonderful manner the incomes made by successful men, not always without much harm to the nation as a whole. It ought to be impossible for any architect to glean a reward of £34,000 from one undertaking. He is a public servant, and not the dictator of a monopoly essential to every one in the State; and the best work is discouraged when the productions of modern art are bought at dropsical prices.

Mr. Thorold Rogers, contrasting the old methods with the new, says: "I have inspected the accounts of buildings in which a multiple of twelve would give good modern prices for materials and labour; while one of thirty or forty would do no more than meet the cost in our present experience of the completed structure. It is the fashion with economists to speak of the functions of middlemen with admiration or complacency, as cheapening agents. I can only say that in many building operations, if I am to judge from mediæval prices, they have trebled *the natural cost* of the object produced, and, as far as I can see, with only one advantage, rapidity of construction—a result often more than compensated by scamped work, bad masonry, and other

OLD ENGLAND

shameful frauds." In other words, building at the present day is three times more expensive than it need be or ought to be, and its craftsmanship is often hurried and bad.

Let us then see in what ways the details of organisation in mediæval times differed from our own. First and foremost was the system of bargain, and the code of honour by which it was governed. A bargain was discussed with infinite haggling and craft; then hands were struck on it; God's silver—a silver penny—was exchanged as a pledge of contract, and this transaction then became as obligatory as bridge debts are now in all good clubs. Sometimes witnesses were present, and often when the matter was important the bargainers put their agreement in writing; but the bargain itself was the prime factor in mediæval trade.

Into all business it entered again and again, lowering the cost of production to the silver-penny point; and because a man felt that his spoken word was his bond, there was less sharp practice than we find now under intricate legal contracts. As an example of method, let us take the subject of Plate 39, a beautiful picture representing Radcliffe on Soar, and imagine the way in which the church was built. We will suppose that the lord of the manor did the work at his own risk and cost, and remained patron of the advowson. The design may have been made by himself, or by some clerical architect among his friends, or again, by his master mason working in accordance with traditional plans and elevations. The "plot" being settled for the

MEDIÆVAL METHODS

whole scheme, the business was carried on in the customary manner. The lord built his own kiln and burnt his lime ; from his woods he got all the timber he required, hiring for this purpose by the week the necessary wood-cutters, sawyers, and carpenters ; whatever metal he needed was not only bought in bulk, but given out by weight to his hired craftsmen, to be weighed again before it was placed *in situ* ; a quarry was opened in the manor estate, or one was rented in the neighbourhood, and carts and labourers were engaged by the day to carry stone to the building site. The masons, like all the other workers, became the employer's men during the progress of their job, and supervision was searching and thorough. Fatigue did not interfere with sound craftsmanship, for the day's work was one of eight hours. On this important point Mr. Thorold Rogers speaks with emphasis, and I quote his words in connection with Bamborough Castle. The short day is an explanation of the fact that although festivals were few in number, the people had many half holidays. They rose very early in the morning, and if they started at five during the spring and summer their work was finished by one o'clock in the afternoon. Business began at least as early as five in the morning, because extra hours, sometimes fifty-eight in a week, were often paid for by the king's agents when hurried work was needed.

But, as a rule, hurry was not a characteristic of the old days. A great deal of care enters into good work, and our ancestors used time to defeat time. That is why their best masonry was perfect.

OLD ENGLAND

One of the most remarkable examples of their foresight in this respect may be found in the history of Bolton Castle, Yorkshire, the subject of Plate 40, which Mr. Orrock represents from the wooded valley of the Yore. The picture is delightfully true, and the castle under the hills has stood there since the reign of Richard II. No fewer than eighteen years were spent in building it, and the cost was one thousand marks a year, eighteen thousand marks in all. Although Bolton was then a forest country, there seems to have been no trees there of the kind needed, for Leland (1506?-1552) expressly states that "moste parte of the tymber . . . was felt out of the forest of Engelby in Cumberland; and Richard, Lord Scrope, for conveyance of it, had layde by the way divers draughts of oxen to carry it, from place to place, till it cam to Bolton." Was there ever before or since such a specimen of thoroughness? We must suppose that well-grown oak was required, and that there was not enough of it in the forests around Bolton. Leland was surprised by other things connected with this castle. He "muche notyd in the haulle of Bolton how chimneys were conveyed by tunnells made on the syds of the wauls betwyxt the lights in the haul; and by this means, and by no covers, is the smoke of the harthe wonder strangely convayed." Here the word "chimneys" means "flues."

This great fortress had four towers, connected by a curtain wall, and defended by a moat. All the masonry was even then exceptional in its solidity and strength, and was described as such by Sir

PLATE XLI
NAPPA HALL, WENSLEYDALE, YORKSHIRE



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BOLTON CASTLE

Francis Knollys, the keeper of Mary Queen of Scots. "It is the highest-walled house I have ever seen, and half the number of soldiers might better watch and ward it than the whole number thereof could do Carlisle Castle." As to the architect, I do not think that any one mind directed the course of the design during the eighteen years. Rather is it likely that several master masons were employed, and that each had a free hand, for the structural details are singularly irregular. Neither towers nor curtains have any two sides equal; and the one thing aimed at everywhere is massive grandeur, not balance of parts.

Bolton Castle was built by the first Lord Scrope, Chancellor to Richard II., and father to Richard, Archbishop of York, who on the 8th of June, 1405, was beheaded at his palace of Bishopthorpe. Another son, the Earl of Wiltshire, for siding against Bolingbroke in 1399, was captured in Bristol Castle, with Sir Henry Green and Sir John Bussy, and beheaded. Meantime, at Bolton Castle, the father remained loyal to Richard II., and endowed a chantry where daily prayers might be said for his king's eternal peace.

To this fortress Mary Queen of Scots was taken from Carlisle on the evening of July 15, 1568, and there she stayed till January 26, 1569, when she started on her journey to Tutbury Castle, Plate 47, wretchedly ill, scarcely able to sit her horse, and frozen by the bitter cold wind. Mary's guardians at Bolton were Lord Scrope, his lady, and Sir Francis Knollys. "The queene here is merry,"

OLD ENGLAND

Knollys wrote, "and hunteth, and passeth her time in pleasant manner."

But it was not possible that this happiness should go on for any considerable length of time. There was something calamitous in the character of Mary Stuart, whose instinct always was to ruin herself by fascinating men. Mary was a flame of ungoverned womanhood, dangerous to herself and to all that ventured to breathe her atmosphere. Froude says with truth that the gates of Bolton Castle were usually thrown open to the neighbourhood, and that eager knight errants had free access to her presence. "When at times she was thought likely to attempt an escape, and the guards were set upon the alert, loyalty, like love, still found means to penetrate the charmed circle. Every high-spirited young gentleman, whose generosity was stronger than his intelligence, had contrived, in some way, to catch a glance from her eyes, and to hear some soft words from her lips, and from that moment became her slave, body and soul."

Among these youths was the unfortunate Christopher Norton, who served Mary with subtilty, courage, and blind patience. Two years later he died at Tyburn under the knife of the executioner. How he managed to enroll himself among the guards of Bolton Castle, how he received messages for the queen and carried them to her, how he masked his real intentions by flirting with her attendants, are things that recall Dumas and the resource of d'Artagnan. Here is one incident described by Norton himself:

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

“One day when the Queen of the Scots, in winter, had been sitting at the window-side knitting of a work, and the board was covered, she rose and went to the fireside, and, making haste to have the work finished, would not lay it away, but worked of it the time she was warming of herself. She looked for one of her servants, which, indeed, were all gone to fetch up her meat, and, seeing none of her own folk there, called me to hold her work, who was looking at my Lord Scrope and Sir Francis Knollys playing of chess. I went, thinking I had deserved no blame, and that it should not have become me to have refused to do it, my Lady Scrope standing there, and many gentlemen in the chamber, that saw she spake not to me. I think Sir Francis saw not, nor heard when she called of me. But when he had played his mate, he, seeing me standing by the queen, holding of her work, called my captain to him, and asked if I watched. He answered sometimes. Then he gave him commandment that I should watch no more, and said the queen would make a fool of me.”

How eloquent this quotation is with a young man's love! Norton watched and remembered every movement that the queen made, and was able to make it real in his ingenuous tale. One outcome of this devotion was the attempt to escape which, so tradition says, ended at “the Queen's Gap,” on the ridge of Leyburn Shawl, where Mary was overtaken by Lord Scrope and his guards. If the legend can be trusted, the queen was let down from her room by the window; but her life had so much romance

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in it that fact seems fiction and fiction fact. One knows not how much to believe.

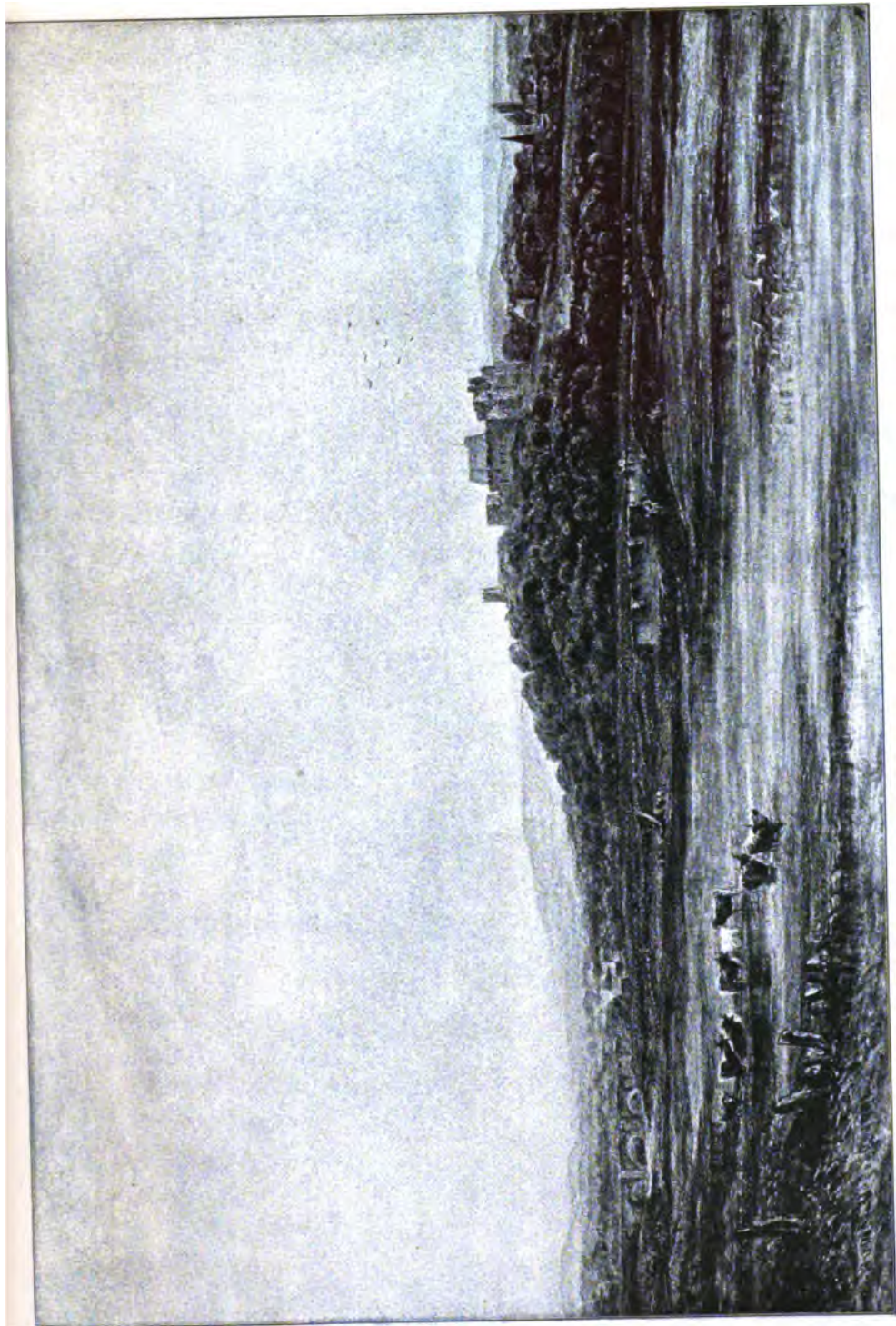
Mary, it is said, spent two nights at Nappa Hall, one of the oldest houses in Wensleydale, where she fascinated her host, Sir Christopher Metcalf; and she is said to have repeated her visit since then, as a ghost, not as a guest. One lady, in the year 1878, gave the following account to Mrs. MacQuoid :

“I was in the hall, playing hide-and-seek with the farmer's little girl, a child about four years old. The hall was dimly lighted by a fire, and by a light from a candle in a room in the east tower. While at play some one entered the hall from the lower end, and walked towards the dais. Thinking it was the farmer's wife, I ran after her, and was going to touch her, when she turned round, and I saw her face. It was very lovely. Her dress seemed to be made of black velvet. After looking at me for a moment, she went on, and disappeared through the door leading to the winding stone staircase in the angle turret of the west tower. Her face, figure, and general appearance reminded me of portraits of Mary Queen of Scots.”

As the portraits in question are rather ugly than pretty, while this apparition was beautiful, I know not what to think of this story. Still, it is a welcome incident that adds to the interest and fame of Nappa Hall.

There is no other house in Wensleydale with the charm that this one has for all travellers. The Metcalfs lived there for centuries; and among the memorials of Mary Stuart which were treasured by

PLATE XLII
LANCASTER CASTLE, ON THE LUNE



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NAPPA HALL

the family, at Nappa or elsewhere, we may read of an autograph letter, a pair of hawking-gloves, and a great oak bedstead. Perhaps the ghost wished to claim these relics, and was too shy to ask for them in the twilight.

Tradition says that Mary's son, James the First, paid a visit to Sir Thomas Metcalf at Nappa; that he went on a hunting expedition, and was brave until he found it necessary to cross the river Yore at a shallow place; then the little king lost his nerve, and sent hurriedly for a big huntsman, who carried him over pickaback. His Majesty was really quite pleased, and the neighbourhood laughs at him to this day.

This is all I can learn about Nappa Hall, except that it was built in accordance with the methods described in this chapter. The picture by Mr. Orrock, Plate 41, will be appreciated by all who know the district. It shows clearly that Nappa was built as a defensive place, a castle rather than a house.

CHAPTER V

WAR AND THE ANCIENT CASTLES

YEARS ago, on the top of a Welsh hill, a wonderful old garden defied the winds, and smiled over its victory. It was filled with fruit trees, all twisted by their resistance to the weather, but so fresh and strong that Pan himself might have been pleased to sit under the branches, and play there on his pipes till the skylarks fell dead with envy. In spring the trees put on a most delightful covering of pink-and-white blossoms and green leaves, which made a glorious filigree of mosaic against the translucent blue sky; and a colony of bullfinches visited the buds several times in a morning, and upon their brilliant red plumage the sunlight sparkled into rubies. It was a picture never to be forgotten.

Many admired it because they considered that it was a picture full of peace; while others looked under the surface and knew that there were signs of war in every one of its bright attractions. The buds, slow of growth and frail, came out for the bullfinches to ravage; and wherever one looked in the radiance of that garden, Nature was at work in two ways—destroying and producing, “red in

WAR

tooth and claw," yet generative and prolific. Birth and death went hand in hand together, a midwifery that killed and saved at the same moment.

Man as a part of Nature shares in this eternal renaissance through strife : and what the unending conflict was to our forefathers is the subject of this book and of all English history. The feudal castles of England were the spirit of war expressed in stone. They are ruined castles now, standing in the midst of a quietness which came through their help after long ages of unrest and bloodshed ; but the spirit of war that brought them into existence, and gave them centuries of active work to do, is to-day as operative as it ever was, only its methods differ, and its aims are mostly commercial. Generals are to be found in all shops and factories, planning their campaigns, growing rich on their victories, or heart-broken over crushing defeats ; and the Napoleonic policy of the big battalions makes formidable machines of industrial war, that crush out of being all little independent and personal enterprises. Meanwhile there are six millions of trade soldiers who cannot find employment in the strife, who are mere camp followers ; and these live always on the brink of starvation.

We may rebel against this lot of ours, but our rebellion is only one phase of the multitudinous conflict by which men and nations are made and unmade. We can no more escape from our destiny as soldiers than a rabbit can evade the law which makes it the natural prey of stoats and weasels. The useful and necessary thing is to fight in a loyal, creditable

OLD ENGLAND

way, keeping constantly in mind the beneficence underlying the war of Nature.

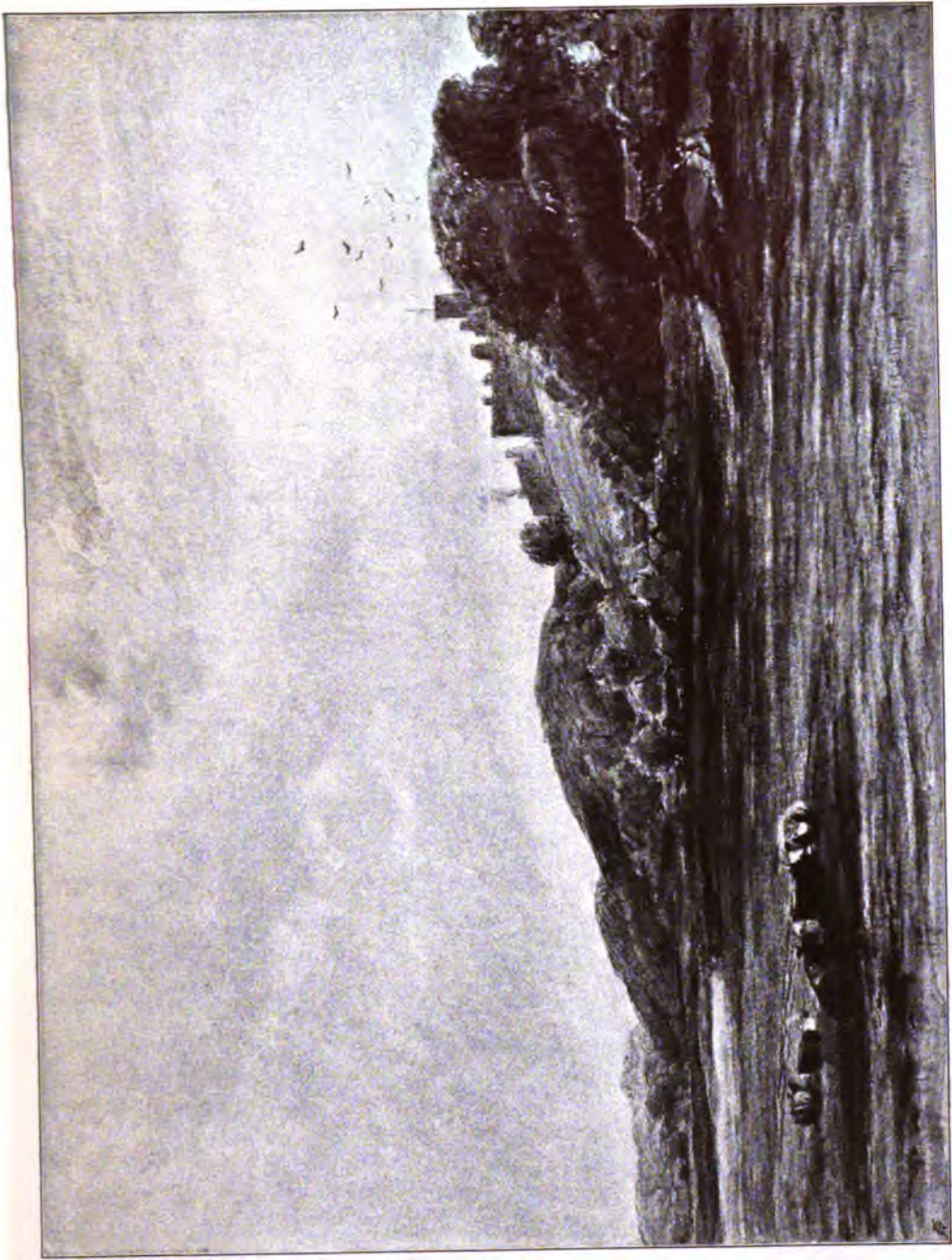
Augustus Jessopp, D.D., says with truth: "Earthquakes have their use, and hurricanes do some work in the economy of Nature, and the eruption of the volcano casts up the dust of continents to be." In the strife of men the best races come slowly to the front, learn the arts of government, and pass them on to subject nations. Battlefields have ever been the burial grounds of outworn types of society and the birthplaces of new eras of progress. Jesus Himself said that He brought a sword, realising that His truth would divide families and set nations at variance.

None can penetrate the awful mystery in which this universal war is enveloped. But the results are to be seen everywhere, and to quarrel with results will ever be futile and childish. As well might we quarrel with the bread we eat because the wheat-lands are nourished with foul refuse that no human hand would willingly touch.

Yet there are many who live in open revolt against the ordering of this world. They cry out for peace, perpetual peace, peace at any price; and not a few of them, while making this parade of their gentleness, are callous soldiers in the wars of trade, showing no more pity for their beaten rivals than the Saxons felt for the Romanised Britons whom they slaughtered at Pevensey. Much in this matter may be learnt from the Society of Friends. The Quakers were honest believers in Peace, a poetic hallucination; and to make this

PLATE XLIII
PRUDHOE CASTLE, NORTHUMBERLAND,
FROM THE FORD AT OVINGTON





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THE QUAKERS

ideal real they not only fought against all disputes between nations, but forgot their citizen duty to their native land. Thus, at the very height of the crisis with Napoleon, when defeat would have meant the break-up of England, the Society of Friends issued regulations to forbid its members to take part in the war, even indirectly, as by helping soldiers on their way to the front. But after Waterloo, when the mending and recuperative processes were a stimulus to trade, the peace-loving Quakers were excellent men of business, and gladly put in their pockets what they could glean from the commercial aftermath of a successful war.

What was that but the idealism of a Dick Turpin? The Quakers were at variance with England, mere outlaws when battles had to be fought, and money-getters when the battles were over. One has a feeling of shame that they could have been born in England at the same time as the Pictons and the Craufords, the Wellingtons and the Nelsons. But there are in English history outlaws very different in kind from the Quakers. There is the traditional Robin Hood of the fourteenth century, brave as Athos, clever as d'Artagnan, naïve and strong as Porthos. He personified the peasants' revolt against the nobles who lived in great threatening castles; and the ballads which gathered about Robin's deeds are to this day as fragrant as an apple orchard in Devonshire:

“ In somer when the shawes be sheyne
And leves be large and longe,
Hit is full merry in fair foreste

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To hear the foulys song ;
To see the dere draw to the dale
And leve the hilles hee,
And shadow hem in the leves grene
Under the grene wode tree."

There's a picture of the mediæval summer. Nature made poetry in the rough and brutal campaigning life of the Middle Ages, during those days when feudal barons in their halls were amused after dinner by the songs of minstrels who proclaimed the equality of man and the emancipation of the poor, my lords listening as to a fairy tale, with smiles of approval, and never a symptom of indigestion. Yet kings were to imitate the minstrels. Edward I. did so when he summoned the first genuine English parliament in 1295, saying that things meant for the good of all should be approved by everybody. This admission meant a victory for the people in their conflict against the military feudal power represented by castles in all parts of the country. Little by little, England was to be guarded by her own people without help from ancient castles; and at last a new feudalism, summed up in the genius of Cromwell, would destroy with powder and shot what remained of the old mediæval strongholds as in the valley of the Wye.

When we look beyond the time of Edward I., and across the centuries of unrest and slaughter that joined his reign to the coming of the Saxons, we feel in every page of England's history the rugged domineering presence of huge castles, guardians often as cruel as the legal discipline of

STEPHEN'S CASTLES

the times, yet performing with a rough thoroughness a duty which had to be discharged somehow, anyhow, rather than not at all.

The most prolific period in the building of castles was the nineteen years (1135-1154) of King Stephen's reign, when feudalism ran wild, and when more than eleven hundred strongholds were put up. Thus, directly or indirectly, the gentle-natured Stephen was the greatest builder of mediæval castles. He was the Charles the First of the Middle Ages—an artist who was King of England in an epoch so much at variance with his native tastes that he was driven by reaction to excesses of stubborn wilfulness. The castles of Stephen's time were particularly well-arranged as fortresses. They consisted of an outer bailey or court, an inner bailey, and the keep, five storeys high, beginning with the dungeons below ground, and ending with the Lord's residence on the fourth and fifth floors. This keep, with walls two feet thick, was surrounded, at a convenient distance, by a wall about twelve feet high, having ramparts and a parapet, and flanked with towers and demi-bastions. Outside the wall was a deep, stagnant moat. These fortress castles were the origin of our modern flats. That is to say, each storey of the keep was a dwelling-place, the second being used for the lord's servants and stores, the next by the garrison, the fourth for the baron's state-room, while the top floor of all contained the sleeping apartments of his family. Prisoners lived underground in the dungeons, with rats, lizards, foul smells, and enteric fever.

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Many of the castles built by William I. and his son were remodelled by Henry I. and Stephen, and in the thirteenth century the Stephen fortresses were enlarged by additional buildings around the keep. "The hall," says Professor Banister Fletcher, "still remained the principal feature. Chimneys and large-hooded fireplaces became general. The castles were less strongly fortified, as the growth of the royal power suppressed petty wars between rival nobles, while the later invention of gunpowder made the moat comparatively useless, and soon rendered quite obsolete the castle system of defence."

Castles in their time destroyed much, but they also brought into existence many villages which grew up into towns. This happened at Richmond (Yorkshire), and Knaresborough, Plates 23 and 24, as well as at Bamborough and Holy Island, Plates 15 and 16. Indeed, Bamborough was the parent of all the villages that King Penda and his Mercians destroyed in that neighbourhood.

But numerous misconceptions are current at the present time concerning these ancient strongholds. People think of them with horror, as they do of the murderers who contribute to the success of Madame Tussaud's Chamber of Horrors. We hear the worst of all periods, our own included, and there were Norman barons who misused their castles and were barbarously cruel. As an example of this we

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PLATE XLIV

**NORHAM CASTLE, NORTHUMBERLAND,
ON THE SOUTH BANK OF THE TWEED**



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ROBERT DE BELESME

may take the very remarkable character-sketch that Henry of Huntingdon drew of his contemporary Robert de Belesme, Earl of Shrewsbury, "a very Pluto, Megæra, Cerberus, or anything that you can conceive still more horrible." "He preferred the slaughter of his captives to their ransom. He tore out the eyes of his own children, when in sport they hid their faces under his cloak. He impaled persons of both sexes on stakes. To butcher men in the most horrible manner was to him an agreeable feast." This madman at large was a human earthquake, and he was not alone in the time of Henry I. But he met with his deserts. Henry took his castle of Arundel after a siege of three months, and then attacked the earl both at Bridgnorth and at Shrewsbury. In the beginning of the twelfth century, the castles of Bridgnorth and Shrewsbury were separated by a forest, and the only road was a narrow defile between two hills, along the summits of which Belesme put his archers. Henry had with him 60,000 native English troops, and with these men he cut down the trees and made a safe passage to the gates of Shrewsbury, where Belesme surrendered at discretion. His life was spared for the moment; but he was banished from the kingdom, and promised under oath that he would not return without permission from the King. Belesme retired to Normandy, where he had thirty-four castles, but in a short time he began to intrigue with Henry's brother, Robert, against the King of England. At last he was taken prisoner, brought

OLD ENGLAND

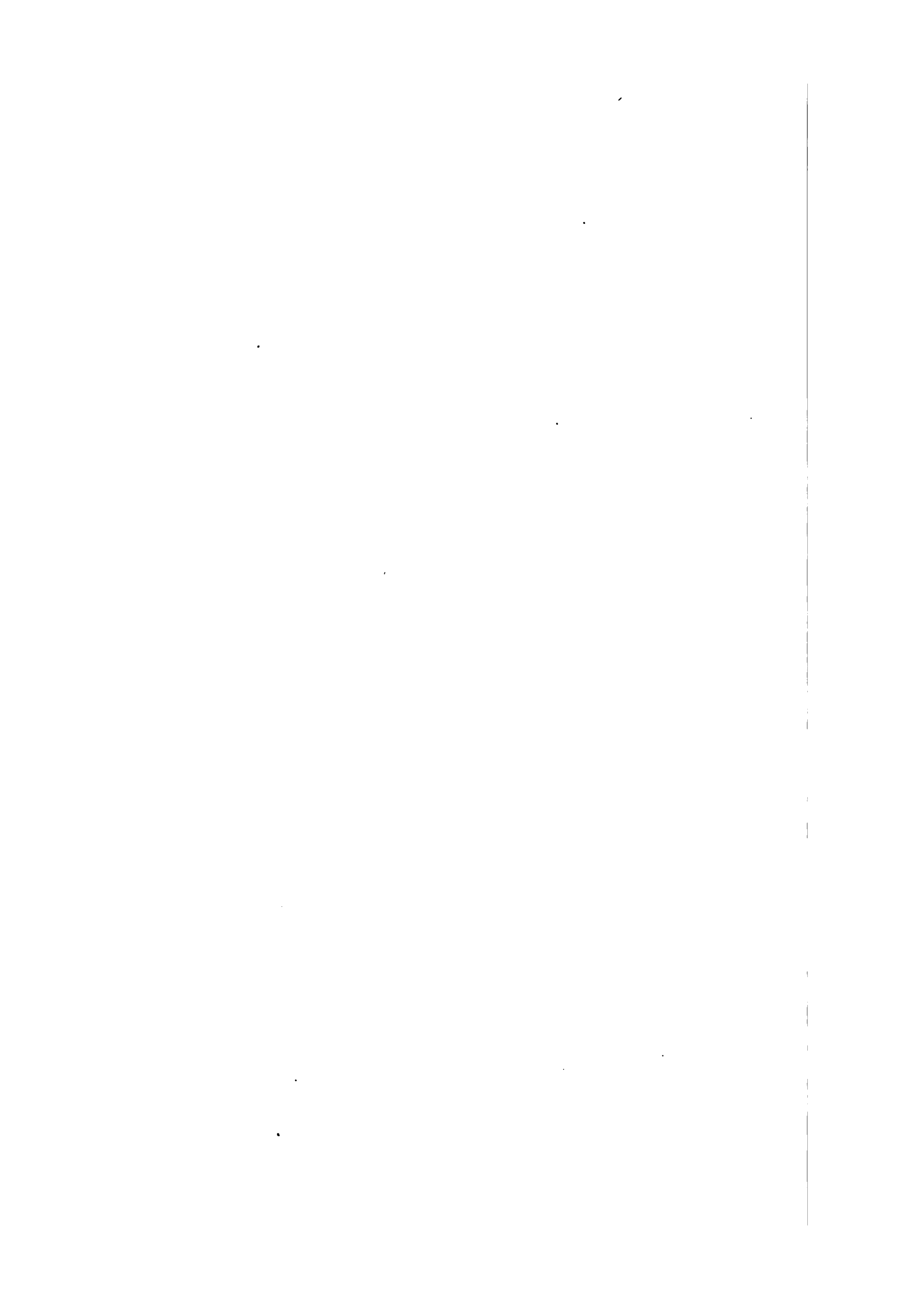
history of mediæval agriculture, the best standpoint from which the influence of castles can be judged :

“ I do not find, in searching through the records of mediæval business, that complaint is made of rapine or wrong-doing, either by the king’s deputies or by the nobles who had those fortified habitations. The castle, even after the use of gunpowder became familiar, does not appear to have often been furnished with artillery, though it was and remained in immediate possession of the Crown. The establishment of a private fort would, I conceive, be looked on with the gravest suspicion, and be conceived to be evidence of sinister designs. It is remarkable, too, after the general demolition of castles on the accession of Henry II., that mediæval warfare in England was rarely characterised by sieges, though in the war between king and parliament the fortified house, doubtlessly under royal license or command, is constantly assailed, defended, and captured, or successfully held. These castles were useful in maintaining the peace, as quarters for such soldiers as the king habitually kept under arms, and as residences for the sovereign and his court. Thus, on the Scotch and Welsh borders, they were important instruments in checking marauders ; and, as is well known, the line of fortified castles from Flint to Carnarvon was part of the machinery by which Edward held the Principality in a firm grasp. But it does not appear that the castle was conceived to be a means of controlling the king’s subjects. . . It was almost always outside the circle

PLATE XLV

WARKWORTH CASTLE, NORTHUMBER-
LAND, ABOUT A MILE FROM THE SEA,
AND ON THE RIVER COQUET







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THE BRITISH RACE

of the city wall and moat, though connected with it by an outwork."

None can study the beginnings of English history without feeling that the mind is constantly drawn to the most warlike part of the country, the northern districts, where the cauldron of the races boiled with the greatest heat, and where the amalgam formed by the boiling became most enduringly English in sternness and thoroughness. To learn what England was long and long ago, we must go into the northern counties and study the people there by the light of past history. It is then clear that a great deal of nonsense has been written about the "Anglo-Saxon" race.

The blend of nationalities in our blood is not so simple as all that. The Romans left behind them something more personal than the results of their handicrafts. In the Border Country, and near it, Mr. Orrock, during his long sketching tours, made notes of the women and men who are Romans by descent, bearing to this day in face and figure the type of those legionaries who filled the north with their colonising camps and roads. Through fear of the Brigantes and the Caledonians, who appalled the legions under Severus, the Romans, with infinite determination, rooted themselves deeply in the northern soil; and the survival of their race has produced a very distinctive man and woman, short, strong and elegant, with small, capable hands, dark hair, a neck short and thick, and that bold, square forehead that gives a look of masterfulness to Roman

OLD ENGLAND

statuary. The Roman type may be seen also in other parts of England, but in the north it is particularly evident.

When the Saxons under Ida arrived in Northumbria, they had to face approximately the same conditions as those which determined the Roman policy, and with great thoroughness Ida built his camp at Bamborough (Plate 15) and tried to make his kingdom secure from invasion. Those were times when the strongest alone could survive the hardships of life ; and the survivors brought into the world children as robust as themselves. Through the native women the Celtic blood got into the conquering race, just as in Sussex the newcomers preserved many of the Welsh characteristics, as may be noted to-day by any one who has lived both in Sussex and among the people of North Wales. The forays of the Scotch brought other strains of blood into the Northumbrian breed ; and at the end of the eighth century those peculiar builders of towns, the Danes, began their bloodthirsty career in the north of England, destroying before they settled down to make homes for themselves. At a later date they acted thus in Ireland, where they founded Limerick, Cork, Waterford, and Dublin. In Midland England the Danes established themselves in the confederation of the five boroughs, Leicester, Lincoln, Derby, Nottingham, and Stamford, while in the Eastern Counties the radial centres of their trading ambitions were Colchester, Bedford, Huntingdon, and Cambridge. These Danish pirates did much good in the long

THE DANES

run, but their aims at first were terrible and ravaging. Among the northern strongholds that tried to put some limit to their depredations the influence of Bamborough Camp was very important; while Lancaster, which Mr. Orrock has drawn with great success in Plate 42, must have been an excellent guard on the western coast towards Ireland, and the Danish settlement of Dublin. Briefly, the Danes came as immigrants to stay, and their Viking blood gave new qualities to the Romano-Celtic-Anglo-Saxons. When to this blend of races the Normans added something of their breed, the people of England were indeed fearfully and wonderfully made; and the sternest and most varied types lived then in the lusty north counties, where they are still to be found.

As many of the illustrations in this book belong to the north counties, it is convenient to give here some definite plan to the early history of Bernicia and Deira in its relation to the subject of this chapter, War and the Ancient Castles. The Kingdom of Northumbria in its great days stretched from Edinburgh to the Humber; and the early history of the North may be divided into two periods:

I. A.D. 635 to A.D. 875. The Church active and hopeful in the midst of war, sheltered, at least to some extent, by the Roman fortifications and by the camps at Bamborough, Wark, and Yevering Bell, a spur of the Cheviot range twelve miles south of Norham, where remains of the earthworks may be seen to-day.

OLD ENGLAND

2. A.D. 875 to A.D. 1074. The Church greatly weakened, and some say almost obliterated, by Danish and Scotch raiders.

The first period begins with the work of Oswald and Aidan at Lindisfarne, the Holy Island ; it ends with the flight of the monks from Holy Island with the body of St. Cuthbert. The second period closes with the battle of Carham-on-Tweed, after which the Tweed became recognised as the boundary between the English and Scotch marches.

The first period is one of singular attraction. During the greater part of its two hundred and forty years, Providence seems to have brooded over Northumbria, to call forth a peculiar greatness from the chaotic tumult of the times. It was the little boys from Deira (present day Northumberland) who delighted Gregory the Great in the slave market at Rome, causing him to say that such Angles were Angels, and that their king, Alla, should sing Alleluiah. It is a pretty tradition, and Gregory sent Augustine. Meanwhile Christianity had reached the north from Ireland, a fact which a great many people have forgotten. Just eight days after King Ethelbert's baptism in Kent, there died in the isle of Iona on June 9, 597, the great Irish missionary St. Columba, who thirty-four years before had sailed over from his native Donegal, with twelve disciples, to convert the Northern Picts. It was Columba who trained Aidan and Oswald, and the influence of these men on Cuthbert was very marked. Cuthbert, who was buried at Holy Island in the year 687, was contemporary with Caedmon,

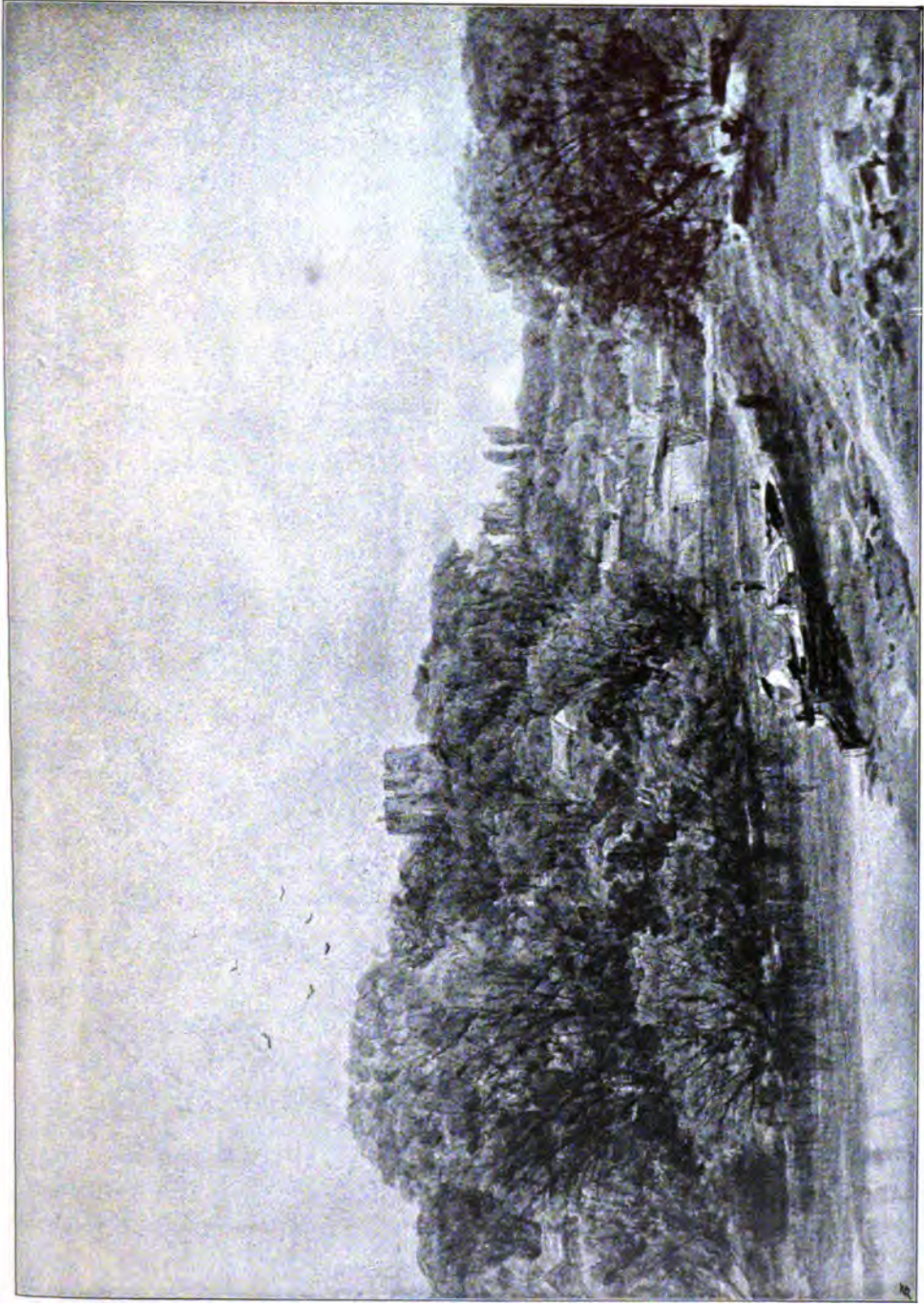
PLATE XLVI

CONISBOROUGH CASTLE ON THE DART,
IN THE WEST RIDING OF YORKSHIRE,
NEAR ROTHERHAM

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NORTHUMBRIA

the poet of Whitby; and in due time Bede at Jarrow, dying in 735, would leave behind him the great ecclesiastical history of the English people. After Bede came Alcuin of York, who in 781 became the confidential adviser of Charlemagne, and under whom the famous "Caroline Books" were composed. It was thus that Northumbrian poets and scholars and saints became as a fountain of light to the whole of Christendom; and Northumbria also, as Green points out, was the first to gather into a loose political unity the various tribes of the English people, and by standing at their head for nearly a century to accustom them to a national life, out of which England as we have it now was to spring.

After the destruction of Lindisfarne Monastery by the Danes in 875, a new phase of war began north of the Humber. The Church urgently needed protection; and in course of time military bishops were to guide her destinies from the See of Durham, with the help of castles. This policy took a great many years to develop, but the Normans brought it to completion in the time of Bishops Flambard and Pudsey, the builders of the mighty fortress of Norham, Plate 44, the most important castle in the northern counties. From A.D. 875 to about the year 1074, Northumberland was stricken with desolation. Sir Hubert E. H. Jerningham, in his book on Norham Castle, quotes a graphic summary of events from Bourne's history of Newcastle-on-Tyne, written in 1736:

"By the invasion of the Danes the churches and monasteries throughout Northumberland were so

OLD ENGLAND

wasted and ruined, that a man could scarcely find a church standing at this time in all the county ; and as for any abbey or monastery, there was not one left ; neither did any man for the space of two hundred years take care for the repairing or building up of anything in decay, so that the people of this county knew not what a monk meant, and if they saw any they wondered at the strangeness of the sight."

It is a quaintly simple passage, giving a vivid idea of deserted villages in a scourged land. The home districts of Aidan and Cuthbert were changed indeed. Their civilisation disappeared, and for long ages they remained the rudest parts of Britain. All over the north there was great distress. In the crucible of war races burned and melted into fusion, losing at least half of their number and substance. It seemed impossible that the terrible antagonism of their strife should ever cool down into established order and quiet.

The natives were not afraid of the Scottish raiders, but they had no chance against the Northmen. For the Danes were skilled veterans in war, swift in their movements, clever in tactics, and well armed with steel caps and mail "byrnies" ; while the levies of the "fyrd" were raw militiamen, not only without armour, but with a very curious supply of ineffective weapons, ranging from clubs and stone axes to old-fashioned spears and swords.

Here and there, somehow, despite the general havoc, a church stood erect and uninjured. There was one at Norham, a church of stone, built by

PRUDHOE CASTLE

Egfrid, the last bishop but one of Lindisfarne, between the years 830 and 845. In this church lay the body of Ceolwulf, the Northumbrian king who had been one of the bishops of Holy Island in the eighth century. Camden says that a moated castle was built at Norham soon after the church; and then he goes on to describe the Norman fortress of a much later date. Norham was by far the greatest stronghold in a system of castellated defence carried out by the Norman kings in the English Border Country. But it was not first in the order of time. Prudhoe Castle is of earlier date. It was built by one of William I.'s barons, Umfraville by name, who chose an excellent site on a ridge of undulating hills that command the southern bank of the Tyne, in the neighbourhood of Stocksfield, and facing Ovington Ford. Mr. Orrock's sketch, Plate 43, is taken from the ford, and gives in a few washes of colour the strategical position occupied by Prudhoe Castle. In a military map Prudhoe is a flank outwork about twelve miles west of Newcastle, and approximately the same distance east from Hexham. Standing midway between these places, Prudhoe bore the brunt of many raids, and gave more than its share of help in the slow restoration of industrial quietness. When William the Lion, King of Scotland, attacked Prudhoe in 1174, Odonel Umfraville defended the castle with great courage and success, till relieved by de Vescy, Lord of Alnwick and Malton. The Lion King retreated to Alnwick Field, where he was captured. This feat was celebrated by Harding in old English verse :

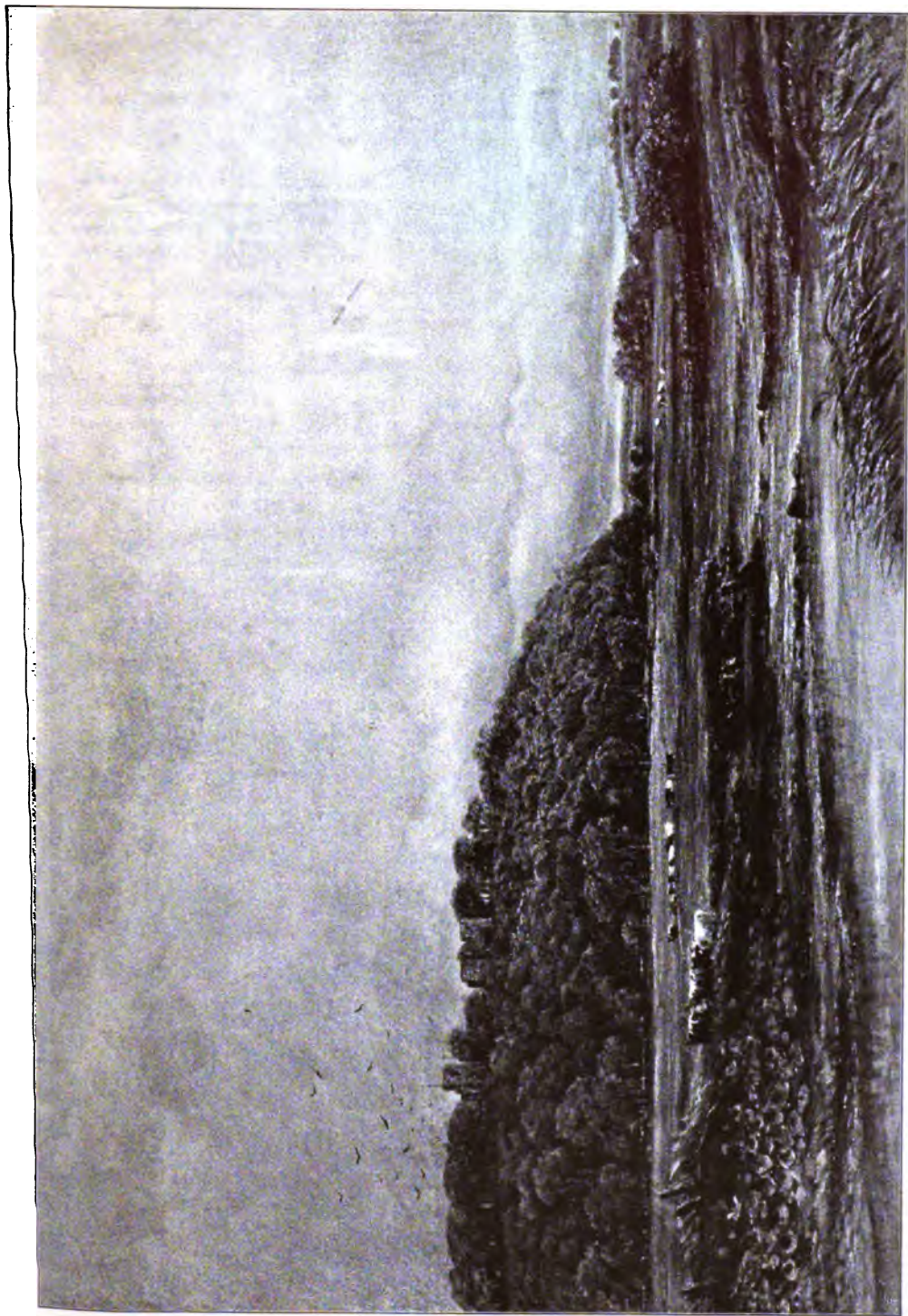
OLD ENGLAND

**"This King Wyllyam then rode with hoste full stronge,
The northre land he brent, and sore destroyed,
By east and west of both marches of Englande ;
The Lord Vescy with it was annoyed,
The Lord Unfrevyle with sickness so accloyed,
With power great at Alnwicke with him fought,
Where he was take in batayll, sore, and caught."**

In 1244 Prudhoe Castle was besieged once again by the Scotch, who battered it to their heart's content ; but the defenders, led by one of the fighting Umfravilles, made a gallant sortie, and took so much spoil that they were able to repair the castle at the enemy's expense. There is a book of stirring adventure in the neighbourhood of Prudhoe, as in every square mile of the Border Country ; and this fact makes me think that history should be taught "on the spot," out of doors in the country, instead of in dull class-rooms. The past would then be renewed in a way pleasant and stimulating to all young minds. Why should there not be Clubs of Local History, to which school-children could be taken to hear good lectures on the castles, on the ruined abbeys, and on many other great connecting-links between past and present England ?

Norham Castle would be a subject for at least a dozen lectures, all as full of interest as a novel by Sir Walter Scott. To-day, as in Mr. Orrock's faithful and excellent drawing, Plate 44, Norham looks innocent and peaceful ; and its position above the Tweed is so beautiful, particularly at sunrise, that its own tragedies seem to be libels on its present-day serenity and charm. When Turner took

PLATE XLVII
TUTBURY CASTLE ON THE RIVER DOVE,
NEAR BURTON-ON-TRENT



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NORHAM CASTLE

off his hat to Norham Castle, he did so, not for the sake of its past influence, but because it had enabled him, one morning at sunrise, to win his first popular success. In his picture the Castle was "enskiéd and sainted," with the radiance of the dawn glowing around it in wondrous tints of amber and gold and ruby.

In history the castle is lit up by the flames of Border fights. Ralph de Flambard, who was consecrated to the See of Durham in 1099, built the first Norham Castle in 1121, but the bulk of it was destroyed by David I. of Scotland in 1138. The fortress, with its great tower surrounded by a wall, seemed to be impregnable, and therefore its garrison was small, consisting of only nine knights and their attendants. These men fought like the heroes of Dumas, doing prodigies of valour; but at the end of several days, no succour arriving from Alnwick, the remnant of the defenders gave in with honour, and were allowed to retreat. David, two years later, offered to hand the castle back to Galfrid Rufus, Bishop of Durham, if the prelate would give up his allegiance to Stephen in favour of the brave Empress Matilda. Rufus declined, so the fortress and the town of Norham were wrecked by the Scotch troops. Dr. Raine, in his "History of North Durham," says that Flambard's masonry may be distinctly traced in the south-east corner and the whole east side of the tower. "About thirty feet of the south side also are of his workmanship. His buttresses are flat, without stages, and his masonry is excellent. That his roof was

OLD ENGLAND

of Norham, March 1, 1328, which seems to have lasted some time, but in 1355 the town of Norham was burnt and plundered by Sir William Ramsay. It was thus that the history of this castle went on, till at last it became associated with the fortunes of James IV. of Scotland in the events which preceded Flodden Field. But the real point of all to be remembered is not the courage so consistently shown in the defence of Norham Castle, but the final result of that courage, namely, the making of quietness and prosperity in the Border Country.

What the unrest was like in the days of predatory war is put in a few graphic words by Dr. Raine, who regarded it as "a matter of surprise that the country at large within fifty miles of the Borders on either side should have been inhabited at all, as neither by day nor night could a man reckon upon his life or substance for a single hour." The Bishop of Carlisle, writing to Wolsey in 1522, drew an equally suggestive picture. "There is more theft," he wrote, "more extortion by English thieves than there is by all the Scots of Scotland. In Hexham every market day there is four score or a hundred strong thieves, and the poor men and the gentlemen also seeth them which did rob them and their goods, and dare not complain of them by name, nor say one word to them. They take all their cattle and horse, their corn as they carry it to sow, or to the mill to gryne, and at their houses bid them deliver what they will have, or they shall be fired and burnt."

But for the Border castles it is clear that life would have been impossible in the English Border

PLATE XLVIII
LUDLOW CASTLE IN SHROPSHIRE



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WARKWORTH

Country. They were rough policemen, no doubt, and some were at times disloyal to the English Crown, as in the case of Wark and Alnwick. Norham Castle was invariably faithful to the principle of royalty, through bad reigns and through good. Even when civil war was being carried on by rival baronial parties who believed in the respective claims to the throne of Stephen and the intrepid Empress Matilda, the Bishop of Durham saw Norham wrecked rather than break faith with Stephen ; while some other castles garrisoned by that king such as Warwick, Plate 51, and Ludlow, Plate 48, surrendered either to Prince Henry himself (son of the Empress, and afterwards Henry II.) or else to his agents.

Among the castles that kept guard over the English Border Country, the one at Warkworth in Northumberland should be remembered ; it is popularly known as Hotspur's Castle, and its situation on the River Coquet is peculiarly impressive. When seen from a distance, as in Plate 45, the site looks bleak and desolate ; but elsewhere the Coquet is a delicious stream, famous for its trout :

“The Coquet for ever, the Coquet for aye !
The Coquet's the king o' the stream and the brae ;
From his high mountain throne to his bed in the sea,
Oh ! where shall we find such a river as he ?
Then blessings be on him, and long may he glide,
The fisherman's home and the fisherman's pride ;
From Harden's green hill to old Warkworth sae grey,
The Coquet for ever, the Coquet for aye !”

Warkworth—“proud of the Percy name”—is among the oldest towns in England, and there are few that equal it in quaint fascination. Originally

OLD ENGLAND

a Saxon settlement, Warkworth rivalled Norham in those days when the Border Country was an arena for freebooters of all kinds. The castle is said to have been built by Roger Fitz-Richard, to whom Henry II. granted the manor of Warkworth in 1158. After passing through many vicissitudes common to Border strongholds, it became a Percy possession, and the Percies lived there to the middle of the fifteenth century.

Plate 46, Conisborough Castle, about five miles from Rotherham, in the West Riding of Yorkshire, is one of the northern strongholds that stood midway between the inundations from the Border country and the ferment of life in central England. Sir Walter Scott was particularly delighted with Conisborough; he made splendid use of it in "Ivanhoe", and thought of it always as one of the few remaining examples of Saxon fortifications. On the other hand, he admitted that his inspection was no more than transient. Both Camden and Scott spell the name Coningsburgh, implying that the hill above the river Dart, a tributary of the Don, was the residence of Saxon kings. Tradition—vague and too adventurous—has made it the burial place of Hengist; it was a home or property of King Harold's. Mr. Orrock, who has examined the ruins many times, has found some evidence of Saxon influence, though the ruins have little workmanship older than that which Will de Warren put up in the time of William I.

Scott was much impressed by a certain kindredship of style between Conisborough and the castles

CONISBOROUGH CASTLE

known as *burghs* in the Zetland Islands, as in the island of Monsa, near the mainland of Zetland. But modern research has not followed Scott in all that he says about this castle. The ruins, taken as a whole, are Norman, though English masons may have helped in the building. The keep is seen distinctly in Mr. Orrock's drawing, and competent authorities now assign it to Hameline Plantagenet, half-brother of Henry II., and husband of Isabel de Warren, great grand-daughter and heiress of the original grantee.

We turn South, and come to the woodland districts of the midlands ; here let us pause for a moment to see the effect of the Norman Conquest on this part of England in so far as it influenced castles. Leicestershire will serve as an example. Here, as elsewhere, the Conquest meant a complete revolution in all civil privileges and in all manorial rights. The county was divided among William's vassals and relatives. To his kinsman, Robert Earl of Mellent, afterwards Earl of Leicester, William gave the greater part of sixteen lordships ; to his nephew, Hugh Lupus, Earl of Chester, he granted twenty-two lordships ; his natural son, William Peverell, Earl of Nottingham, received six lordships ; his niece Judith, Countess of Huntingdon and Northampton, thirty-eight estates ; another noble got fourteen, while Henry de Ferrars had thirty-five, Robert le Despencer seventeen, Geoffry de Wirce twenty-seven, and Hugo de Grentemaisnell sixty-seven. It was well to be a Norman chief high in favour with William the Conqueror.

OLD ENGLAND

To secure their new lands, and to hold the English in subjection, the Norman barons set to work and built many castles, like those at Leicester, Mount Sorrel, Whitwick, Shilton, Groby and Hinckley, Donington, Melton, Ravenston, Sauvey, and Thorpe. Most of these castles, in the bad times of Stephen, won for themselves a hideous character, as places where thieves and freebooters were in safety; and for this reason they were destroyed by the order of Henry the Second. Some were rebuilt and became famous, like Castle Donington; but none has a place in history quite equal to that of Tutbury Castle, on the border of Derbyshire and Staffordshire, in the country of the Needwood Forest.

Tutbury, the subject of Plate 47, is of Norman origin, built by Henry de Ferrars in the reign of William I. In the fourteenth century it passed into the hands of John of Gaunt, who rebuilt the greater part of it in the year 1350. After this it became an appanage of the Duchy of Lancaster, and such it remains to the present day. At the period of the Civil War, in the seventeenth century, Tutbury Castle was held by the King's friends with the usual consequences, its present shattered condition being the result of a parliamentary edict issued in 1646. The ruins stand on a hill of solid alabaster, a geological formation which is common in the district.

But Tutbury Castle is remembered now because it was by far the worst prison in which Mary, Queen of Scots, was confined by Queen Elizabeth; a prison of hideous gloom, of indescribable dirt, cold, and wretchedness. Mary had two rooms built of

PLATE XLIX
STOKESAY CASTLE, SHROPSHIRE







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TUTBURY CASTLE

wood, with walls full of chinks and holes, so that she was chilled to death by draughts and winter winds. Then again, the air was poisoned with gases from open cesspools, and from other places where sewage had been stored for generations. Tragedy was in the air. A priest hanged himself in front of Mary's window ; and a man lost his life by falling into the well. The unhappy Queen often protested against her misery, but little was done to make her prison habitable. Very terrible are the punishments which angry women mete out to each other.

We pass on now to the Marches of North Wales, where the life of the Border Country was repeated, and where Ludlow Castle, Plate 48, had on the banks of the Terne the same strategical importance which made Norham the head and centre of defensive aggression on the Tweed. The Welsh, like the Scotch, were never really subjugated. Centuries of raiding warfare gave them eventually a liking for industrial quietness ; it was that and the logic of craft in statesmanship which united them to England. Before that happened the Marches of North Wales were noted for two things : their indefinite limits and their freebooters.

One of the Mercian kings, Offa, between the years 758 and 796, made a great effort to mark out the limits by means of his famous Dyke, which formed a connecting link between the Wye and the Dee. It was a vast effort of rude military genius, and with its help the Mercians and Welsh lived peacefully together under Offa's code. In the time of Egbert, 802 to 839, the whole of England became

OLD ENGLAND

merged, if only for a moment, in the one title, King of the English. But the Welsh were free; and because they made much ado about their independence, displaying a settled hatred for Offa's Dyke, a chain of camps was begun along the borders, to be garrisoned with picked men under the authority of constables, known as Lords Marchers. The castles were formidable from the reign of William the Conqueror to the birthday in Carnarvon Castle of the first English Prince of Wales, April 25, 1284. The Lords Marchers not only held powers of life and death, but advertised that fact by placing a gallows in every manor within their jurisdiction. Each Lord Marcher had his court of justice, with its own sphere of authority; and this custom lasted to the time of Henry VIII. The court at Ludlow seems to have gone on till the middle of the seventeenth century.

There are few castles with the charm of Ludlow, one of the most beautiful spots on the southern borders of Shropshire, with the river Terne glimmering below in the valley, like a streak of sky, and with glorious views of Caer Caradoc and Whitcliff Hill. In Plate 48 Mr. Orrock has drawn a gracious picture, containing as many characteristics as can be put in one outdoor sketch of the castle and its varied site.

Built after the Conquest, by Roger de Montgomery, Earl of Shrewsbury, Ludlow Castle was forfeited to the Crown in the reign of Henry I. The market town of Ludlow then began to grow up under royal protection, and there is not in

LUDLOW CASTLE

England at the present time a finer specimen of that kind of town. In the next reign the castle was betrayed to the Dowager Empress Matilda, and Stephen took it by assault. Ludlow passed to the Fitz-Warene family, to the great annoyance of the Mortimers, who claimed the estate; this led to many disputes, and at last Hugh de Mortimer was taken prisoner in a skirmish, and shut up in the tower which still bears his name. The property reverted to the Crown under King John, who gave it to one of the Lacies; after this, the Mortimers had their day in Ludlow: and then for the third time Ludlow Castle became a royal estate. In 1263 it was seized by Simon de Montfort, the leader of the barons, who captured so many royal fortresses that Henry III.'s policy seems to have dwindled into one of castles in the air. Ludlow was injured and ransacked during the Wars of the Roses, and then repaired by Edward IV., who made it the court of the Prince of Wales, that unhappy boy whom Richard of Gloucester removed from Ludlow and placed in the Tower of London, there to be murdered as he lay asleep with his younger brother.

For a long time Ludlow Castle remained the residence, now of the Princes of Wales, then of their deputies, the Lords President of Wales, who held within the castle's precincts the High Courts of the Marches. James I. and his son Charles were particularly fond of Ludlow; and it was in the castle that Milton's "Masque of Comus" was performed, in those days when Puritans like Prynne

OLD ENGLAND

raged against the drama. During the great civil war that preceded the Commonwealth, Ludlow Castle received its death-blow. This was in the year 1646. Parliament abolished the Courts of the Marches ; the Lords President of Wales vanished for ever ; and Ludlow Castle, left unprotected, became the resort of thieves who stripped it of all its furniture and riches.

Stokesay Castle, Plate 49, has been chosen by Mr. Orrock as a companion picture to Ludlow. It is a feudal fortress of great interest, within six or seven miles of Ludlow. The old portcullis and drawbridge have disappeared, but in their place stands a noble Elizabethan gateway, with carved cross-beams and timbers, and a fine arched opening into the courtyard. "Opposite is the great hall with its three handsome mullioned and transomed windows separated by three sturdy buttresses supporting the stone roof, and at one end of it the tower. . . . Some evidence yet remains near the tower that the court was once surrounded by a strong parapet with cross-bow loopholes. Again vivid suggestions of the brave days of old are aroused by a contemplation of the interior of the hall ; its fine proportions, and lofty, heavy, beam-arched roof, its solid masonry, handsome windows, and admirable specimens of Early English corbels, whence spring the timbers of the arching roof. It boasts no fireplace, and the smoke-blackened ceiling just above a certain octagonal piece of pavement indicates that a brazier was the only means in use for warming the huge apartment. A room below

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PLATE L
ARUNDEL CASTLE IN SUSSEX





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STOKESAY CASTLE

the hall at the northern end reached by a flight of steps is pointed out as a portion of the most ancient part of the mass. Lighted only by narrow loopholes, there is no doubt it was prepared for defence. Connected with this apartment is a deepish well, which on being emptied some years ago proved to have been made a receptacle for the *débris* of the feasting and wassail carried on in the baronial hall, inasmuch as amongst the noisome rubbish were discovered the skulls of an antlered deer, a wild boar, and the bones of other animals, such as sheep, oxen, &c.—evidence that sanitation did not enter largely into the considerations of the mediæval ages and sages. This well is connected with the moat. Upwards, and outside the hall, a stone stair conducts to what was called the *solar* or withdrawing-room, and there are traces that at one time a roof of some sort sheltered the way taken by the ladies retiring from the banquet to their special domain. Another ascending stair of solid oak leads to two chambers on the first floor, known as the priests' rooms—one paved with curious tiles, but both indifferently lighted by an ogee window of more recent date, and others of lancet form. Above these again is a more ample, better-lighted apartment, not always existing without divisions. The withdrawing-room before mentioned contains a beautifully carved oak fireplace of the date of James or Charles. . . . Many more inferior apartments above and below stairs, wainscoted, panelled, and begirt with the fixtures and decorations of various periods, connected by external as well as internal

OLD ENGLAND

stairs, claim the antiquary's close attention. The great tower, . . . crowned with embrasures, loop-holed battlements, and the remains of some construction for protecting the defenders from the assaults of the catapult, and other primitive weapons of war, mark it as of great antiquity, but disputes arise among the learned in such matters as to whether it or the hall was first erected. The tower—sixty feet high—is supposed to have been built by one Laurence de Ludlow, about 1280, when he received a permit to fortify his mansion." (W. W. Fenn, *English Illustrated Magazine*, 1888-1889, p. 373).

Before we leave the Welsh borders it is worth noting that, taken as a whole, the castles in Wales are every bit as interesting as our English strongholds of the Middle Ages, while in some cases they are less ruined. In South Wales the castles are well-placed and picturesque. Pembroke, the birthplace of Henry VII. in 1456, goes back to the reign of William II., when it was a castle of wood and turf under Arnulph de Montgomery. These materials seem to prove that Arnulph found an early Celtic fortress and made use of it till a stone one could be built. The present ruin has much dignity, despite the mischief done by Cromwell himself. Carew Castle, *tempus* Henry I., where Henry VII. slept on his way to Bosworth Field, is another place that bears witness to the wrecking skill of the Parliamentary troops in the year 1644. They were men with "difficult and ravaging hands." This they proved at Laugharne, near Carmarthen Bay, but not

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WELSH CASTLES

with the thoroughness displayed at Narberth, where the singular remnants of a thirteenth-century castle stick up out of the ground like gravestones of a strange barbaric shape. Manorbier Castle, like Carew, built by Gerald de Windsor in the time of Henry I., is an excellent example of Norman work, standing near the sea, a fortress low, massive, and sinister, with as much intelligence of look as a complete suit of armour possesses. All these castles in South Wales are valuable history, though none is quite so attractive and beautiful as Carnarvon Castle, which artists have preferred to all the other glories of North Wales, Snowden and her sisters not excepted. Carnarvon is, without doubt, the most heroic-looking of all the Welsh fortresses, just as Warwick Castle, Plate 51, and Arundel, Plate 50, are the best in England south of the Humber.

For exquisite scenery and noble park lands, there are few places in the world of a piece with Arundel in Sussex, where we see how our ancestors lived, and where the castle, from the Norman Conquest to the years 1643-44, did the duty assigned to it, which was to guard the most beautiful pass in the South Downs, the gap formed by the waters of the Arun.

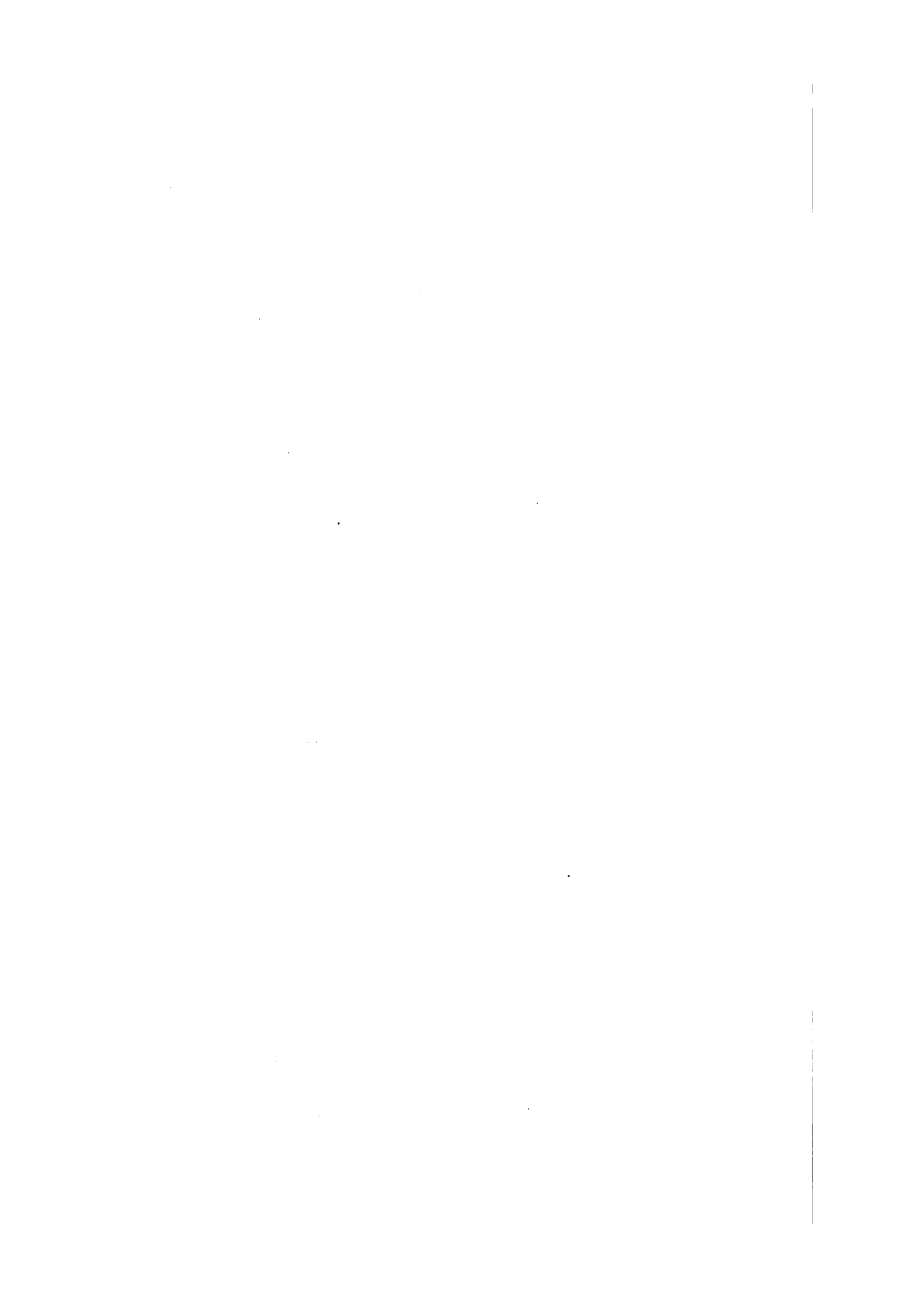
Domesday Book speaks of Arundel as having a castle, a mill, three roads, one pasture, a fishery, and custom of ships, £13. William I. divided the counties of Kent and Sussex among his own relatives and connections, the Rapes of Arundel and Chichester going to Roger de Montgomery, the first Earl of Arundel, whose estates included the

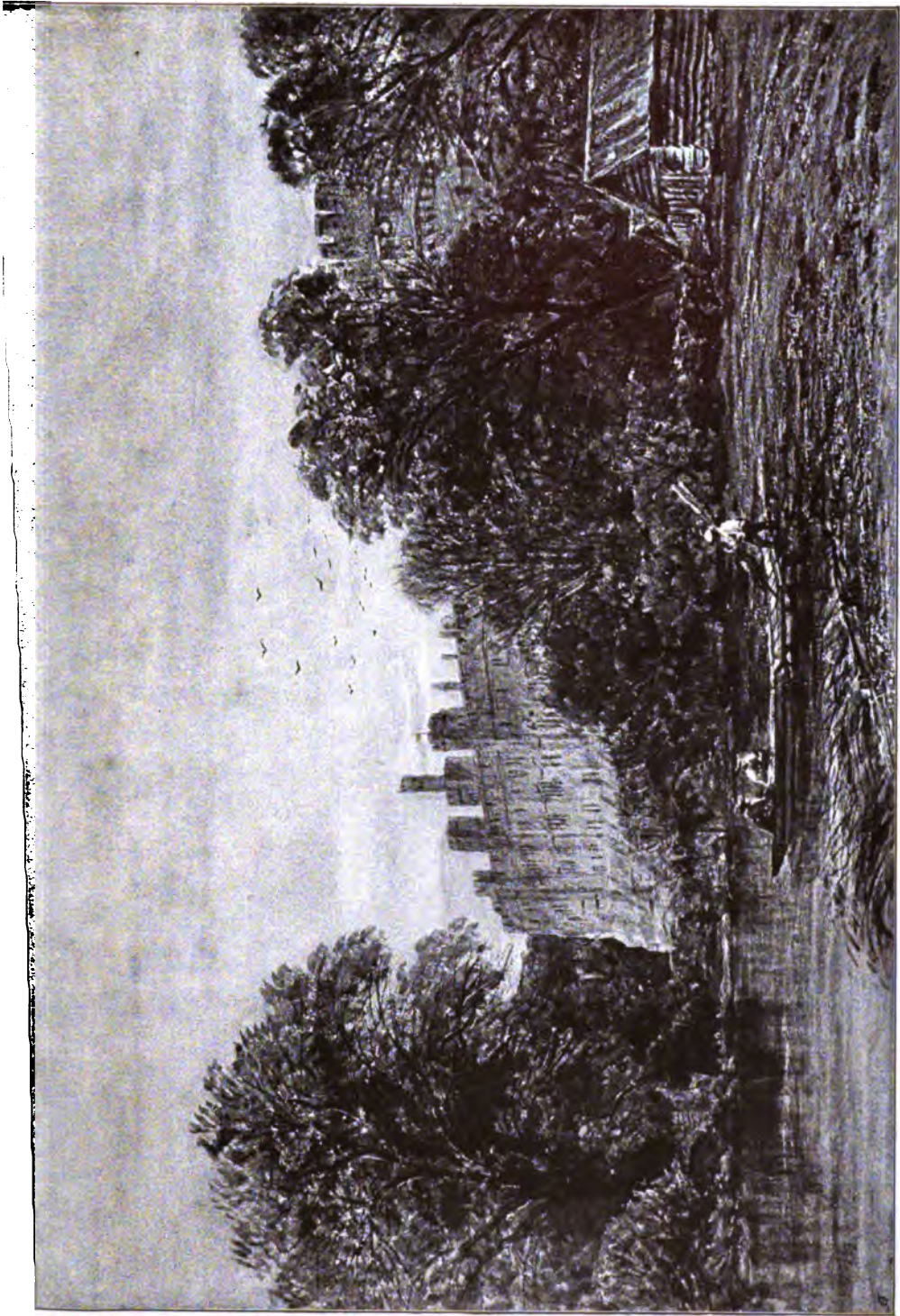
OLD ENGLAND

lordships of Halnaker, Petworth, and Midhurst, ten hundreds, eighteen parks, and twenty manors—more than 58,000 acres in all. The second Earl, Robert de Montgomery, better known as Robert de Belesme (p. 177), lost the estates, and Arundel was granted by Henry I. to his own brother Hugh. Soon afterwards it was transferred to Henry I.'s second wife, Adeliza of Loraine, who eventually took in second marriage the King's butler, William d'Albini, in whose family the estates remained till the year 1243, when the honour was divided between the four sisters of the fifth Earl. One sister, Isabel, had married a Fitz-Alan, and this man assumed the Earldom of Arundel by tenure only, founding a line of seven earls in a direct succession, the last one being Thomas Fitz-Alan, who died in 1415. After a Chancery suit the estates passed in 1433 to John Fitz-Alan, Baron Maltravers, and after this till the year 1579 they were held in succession by the united families of Fitz-Alan and Maltravers. The Earldom then went by marriage to Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk. In 1584 Philip Howard, Earl of Arundel, forfeited his rank and land to Queen Elizabeth, but his son Thomas in the year 1609 was restored to his possessions, and the Howard family has ruled at Arundel ever since.

Tradition has something to say about the barbican at Arundel known as Bevis' Tower. Bevis was a renowned giant with a great appetite, his weekly allowance of food being an ox and two hogs-heads of beer, with a liberal supply of bread and

PLATE LI
WARWICK CASTLE, ON THE RIVER AVON





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ARUNDEL CASTLE

mustard. This appears to have been enough to keep him quite fit as the warder of the castle. Bevis had a sword named Morglay, and a horse called Hironnelle ; and if you dare to mention him without remembering these assistants, his ghost may appear in wrath and fill the whole of your bedroom, not without injury to the window panes and your nerves. The sword is no longer to be found in the castle armoury, but a mound in the park may be looked upon as the giant's grave—if you can find it. William Rufus occupied the castle in 1097 ; in 1102 it was taken by Henry I. from the fiendish Robert de Belesme ; the Empress Matilda was there in 1139 as the guest of Queen Adeliza, but King Stephen came with an army, and the Empress retreated to Bristol. Edward I. visited Arundel in 1302. After this nothing in particular happened for about five hundred years. Arundel was at peace. It was the Parliamentary force under Waller who in 1643–44 laid siege to Arundel for seventeen days and turned the greater part of it into a ruin. The mischief was repaired little by little, and during the past years a great deal of work has been done, so as to alter the restored parts of the main buildings into the style of the thirteenth century. This may seem rather like painting a modern picture in the manner of Giotto ; but it proves, none the less, that the Duke of Norfolk reverences the past of Arundel and desires that the main buildings should be in harmony with the Norman keep and the Edwardian portcullis, draw-bridge, and Clock Tower.

OLD ENGLAND

Mr. Orrock's picture of Arundel, Plate 50, taken from Burpham Ferry, is one of his most charming impressions from Nature; it helps to place him among the few contemporary painters in English water-colour who deserve to be put side by side with Girtin and Hearne and Cox in the art of English topography. For one man who can paint a scene which is good topography as well as fine art, there are at least a score whose landscapes are records of things imagined rather than of things seen imaginatively. The view of Warwick, Plate 51, has equal merit, though it gives necessarily only one facet of a diamond. This unrivalled castle would keep an artist busy for a whole year. Mr. Orrock has painted it a great many times, and I wish a dozen views from his portfolio could be reproduced here.

Warwick, like Arundel Castle, was false to Stephen, while in the troubles of Henry III.'s time it remained loyal to a faithless king, and was taken by a surprise troop sent from Kenilworth. The governor, William Maudit, learnt the meaning of his surname in French, for he had to buy his liberty with a huge ransom of nineteen hundred marks. When that idle and extravagant wastrel, Edward II., was passing from tragedy to tragedy, Warwick Castle became associated with the King's foster-brother, Piers Gaveston, whom Edward I. had banished. Recalled to England by Edward II., Piers was placed in the first rank of the baronage in the Earldom of Cornwall, despite the fact that Edward I. had reserved it for one of his younger

PIERS GAVESTON

sons. Gaveston was a true Gascon, with a sharp wit and a ready sword ; and his victories in the tilting yard enabled him to boast to the great discomfiture of the barons. He had a nickname for every one he disliked, and the nicknames travelled far and fast. Thomas, Earl of Lancaster, had his character summed up in two words of three letters each—"The Hog"; the result being that Thomas, Earl of Lancaster, determined upon the death of Gaveston, and with the help of Pembroke and Surrey he set out doggedly in pursuit of him. They were within an ace of catching Gaveston at Tynemouth, and at last the hunted man surrendered to Pembroke at Scarborough Castle, under a promise that his life would be spared. But another nickname was to play its part in the revenge. This was "Black Dog," the Earl of Warwick, who pulled Gaveston from his bed, and carried him to Warwick, where the pledge of safety was discussed in the most callous manner, Pembroke not being present. "We have caught the fox," it was argued ; "if we let him go we shall have to hunt him again." Gaveston was condemned to death by the council held in Warwick Castle, and on July 1, 1312, at Blacklow Hill, two miles from the castle gates, his head was struck off, a convenient crag serving for a block. A cross was put up seventy-five years ago, thus inscribed : "In the hollow of this rock was beheaded, on the first day of July, 1312, by barons lawless as himself, Piers Gaveston, Earl of Cornwall, the minion of a hateful king ; in life and death a memorable instance of misrule."

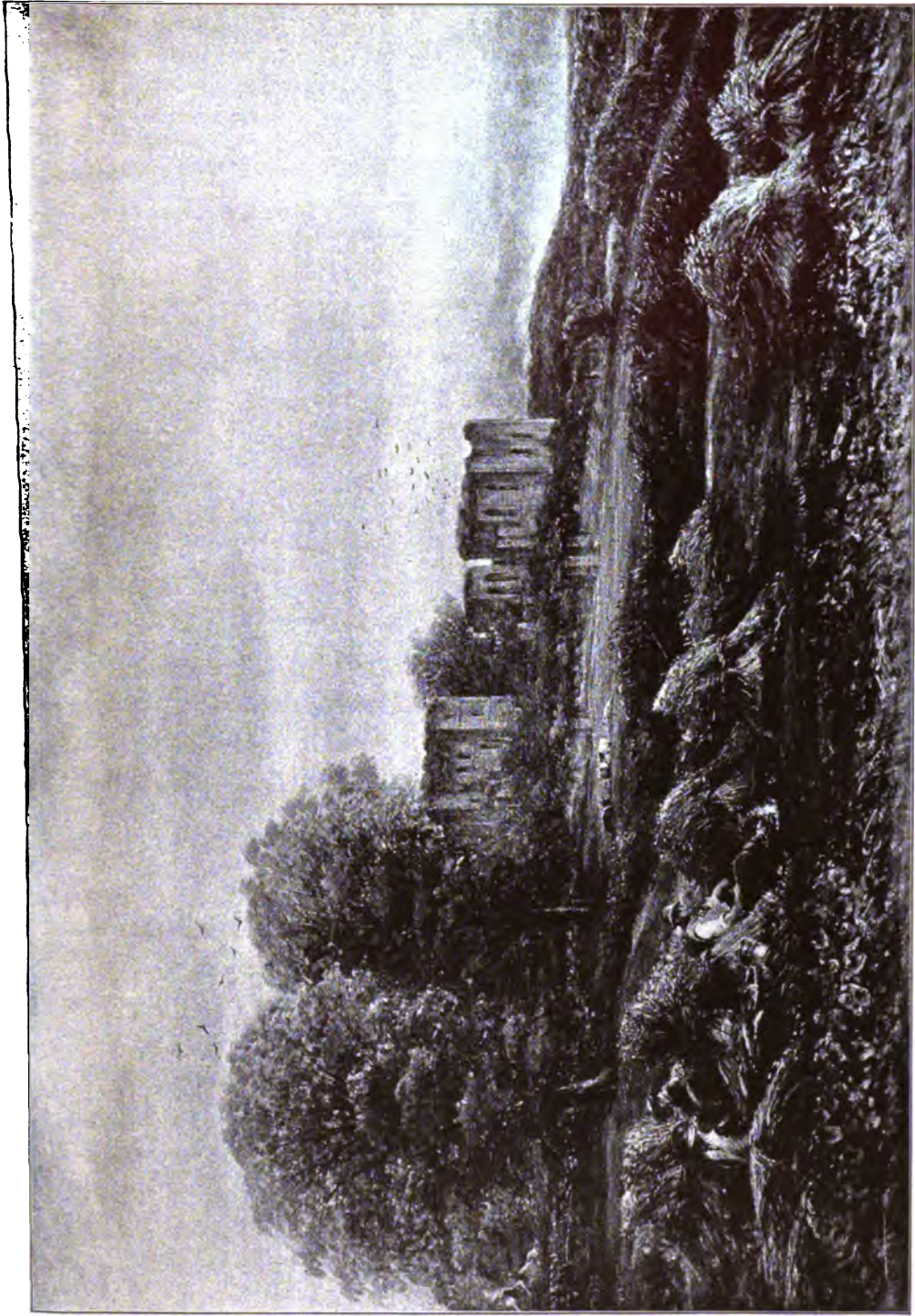
OLD ENGLAND

Gaveston, no doubt, was quite as bad as the age in which his character was misformed ; but his low butchers were even worse than their time. They had not the pluck of Gaveston, nor his skill as an officer in war. Two years after his murder the battle of Bannockburn staggered the world with the inefficiency of English officers, who placed the archers far in advance of the other troops, and left their flanks unprotected, so that the Scotch cavalry rode over them with as much ease as would have attended a charge against rows of haycocks.

Gaveston dead, Edward II., with his graceful manners and his genial temper, drifted on and on among disasters, passing through a sequence of events that formed a very singular run of tragical alliterations on the letter B. Bruce, the Hammer of the English, and Bannockburn, Scotland's Crécy and Agincourt combined, came first ; then Berwick, which Bruce held with success against all efforts ; then Boroughbridge, where Gaveston's chief assassin, Lancaster, was taken prisoner, to be executed without trial at Pontefract ; after this, Byland, where Edward in 1223 was all but taken prisoner by Bruce ; Bristol next, where the Earl of Winchester, aged ninety, being one of Edward's favourites, was embowelled alive, and his body cut into pieces and thrown to the dogs ; and last of all Berkeley Castle, where Edward himself was murdered by Thomas Gournay and William Ogle, September 22, 1327. It was confidently whispered at the time that "his death had been procured by the forcible introduction of a red-hot iron into his bowels."

Satan himself must have been ashamed of
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PLATE LII
KENILWORTH CASTLE, WARWICKSHIRE



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EDWARD THE SECOND

England for some long time after these more than devilish atrocities. Before Edward of Carnarvon reached Berkeley Castle, he was a prisoner for some time at Kenilworth, Plate 52, the last of the castles illustrated by Mr. Orrock. It was at Kenilworth, in January 1327, that Edward received news of his deposition by Act of Parliament, "the voice of the people being the voice of God," as the primate ventured to say at such a time and in the midst of such barbarities. The commissioners who brought this news to Edward got from him, so his enemies believed, a voluntary resignation of the Crown, and thanks to Parliament for continuing the succession in his own family. According to his friends, Edward replied that no act of his could be deemed free as long as he remained a prisoner ; but that he should endeavour to bear patiently whatever might happen. All the scenes at Kenilworth must have been hideous and pitiful. The first commissioners to arrive were two of Edward's clerical enemies, the Bishops of Winchester and Lincoln. They preached to him about the greatness of mind he would show by giving up the crown voluntarily ; promised him in the event of his compliance that he should enjoy a princely revenue and household ; threatened, if he refused, to pass by his son and choose a king from another family ; and then, having stirred the unhappy man with hopes and fears, they led him, dressed in black, into another room, where Edward came face to face with his most dreaded foe, Adam Orleton, Bishop of Hereford. At the sight of this prelate, Edward sank to the ground, and cowered like a wounded

OLD ENGLAND

animal, but in a short time recovered his self-control and listened with dignity to Orleton's speech.

Then Sir William Trussel, representing the nobles, said that he gave back to Edward, once king of England, the homage and fealty of the persons named in his procuracy; "and acquit and discharge them thereof, in the best manner that law and custom will give." "And I now make protestation in their name," he went on, "that they will no longer be in your fealty or allegiance, nor claim to hold anything of you as king, but will account you hereafter as a private person, without any manner of royal dignity." But this ceremony was not yet at an end. The steward of the household, Sir Thomas Blount, had still to break his staff of office, and declare that all persons engaged in the royal service were discharged. This was always done after the death of an English king, and Edward being dead as king, Blount snapped his staff in two, and mumbled the old formula, and the second Edward became Edward of Carnarvon, "a private person, without any manner of royal dignity."

His watch-dogs at Kenilworth saw to that. Sir John de Maltravers was the chief warder, a man not only stern and cruel, but harassed in his responsible position by the fear that the English people might relent, and become friendly to Edward in his overthrow and humiliation. With this dread in mind Maltravers acted like a fiend, and by means of insults and indignities tried to shorten his captive's life. At last, to conceal the place of Edward's residence, he transferred the prisoner to

KENILWORTH

Corfe, then to Bristol, and finally to Berkeley Castle. When he left Kenilworth, Maltravers, in the open fields between the castle and Warwick, disguised Edward by shaving the hair from his head and face with ditch-water. This act of devilish cruelty is related by old Stow in the following words :

“ Devising to disfigure him that hee might not bee known, they determine for to shave as well the haire of his head as also of his beard ; wherefore, as in their journey they travailed by a little water which ranne in a ditch, they commanded him to light from his horse to be shaven, to whome, being set on a moale hill, a barber came unto him with a bason of colde water taken out of the ditch, to shave him withall, saying unto the king that that water would serve for that time. To whome Edward answered, that would they, noulde they, he would have warme water for his beard ; and to the end that he might keepe his promise, he began to weepe, and to shed teares plentifully.”

It is not necessary to follow the history of Kenilworth farther than that. The best part came in the time of Elizabeth, and Scott made it into one of the finest stories ever written. To-day all is desolate at Kenilworth. “ The bed of the lake is but a rushy swamp,” wrote Scott ; “ and the massive ruins of the castle only serve to show what their splendour once was, and to impress on the musing visitor the transitory value of human possessions and the happiness of those who enjoy a humble lot in virtuous contentment.”

CHAPTER VI

FORESTS : THE CONQUEST OF ANDERIDA SILVA. "THIS IS THE FOREST PRIMEVAL"

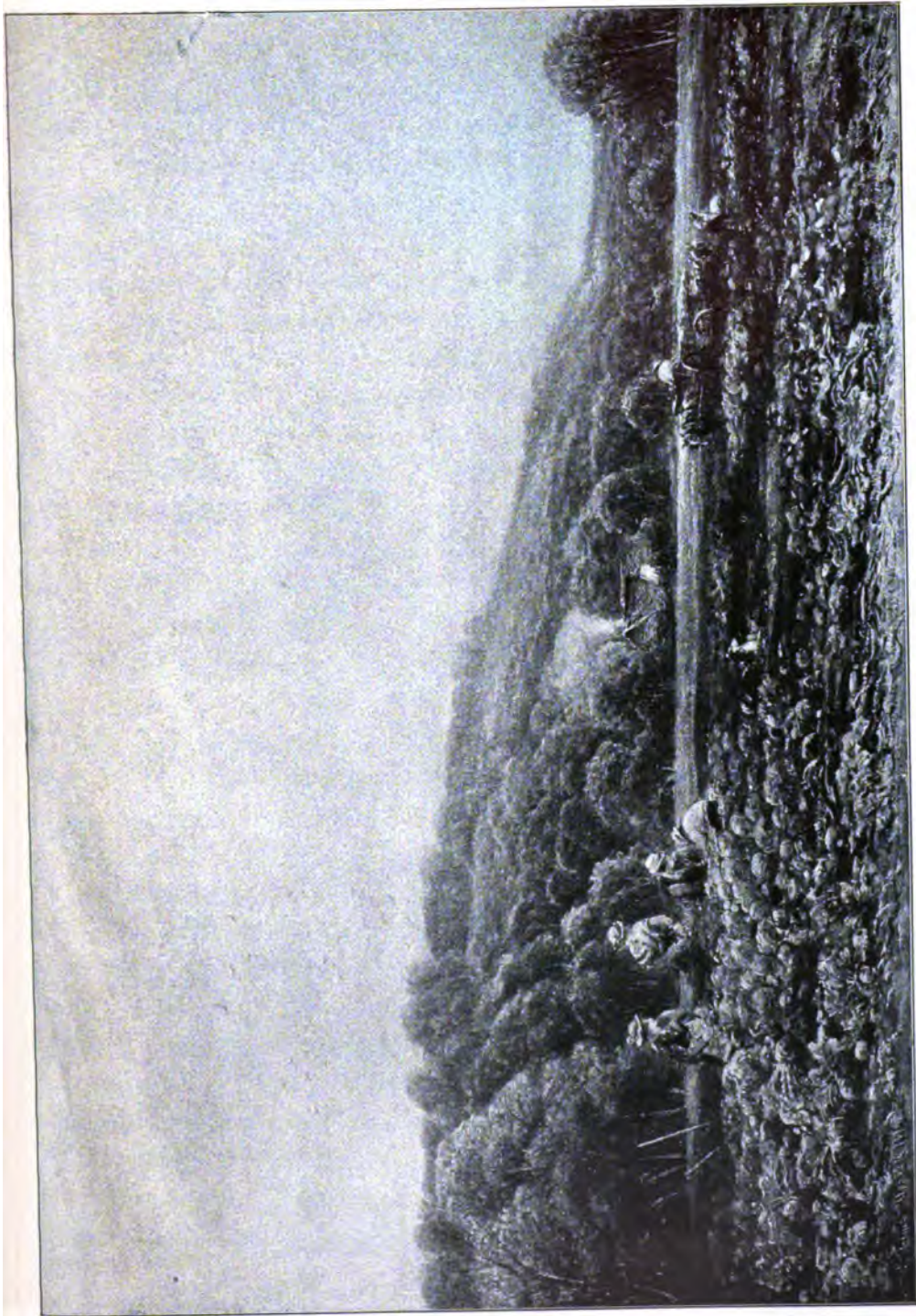
THERE are three things to be considered in this chapter :

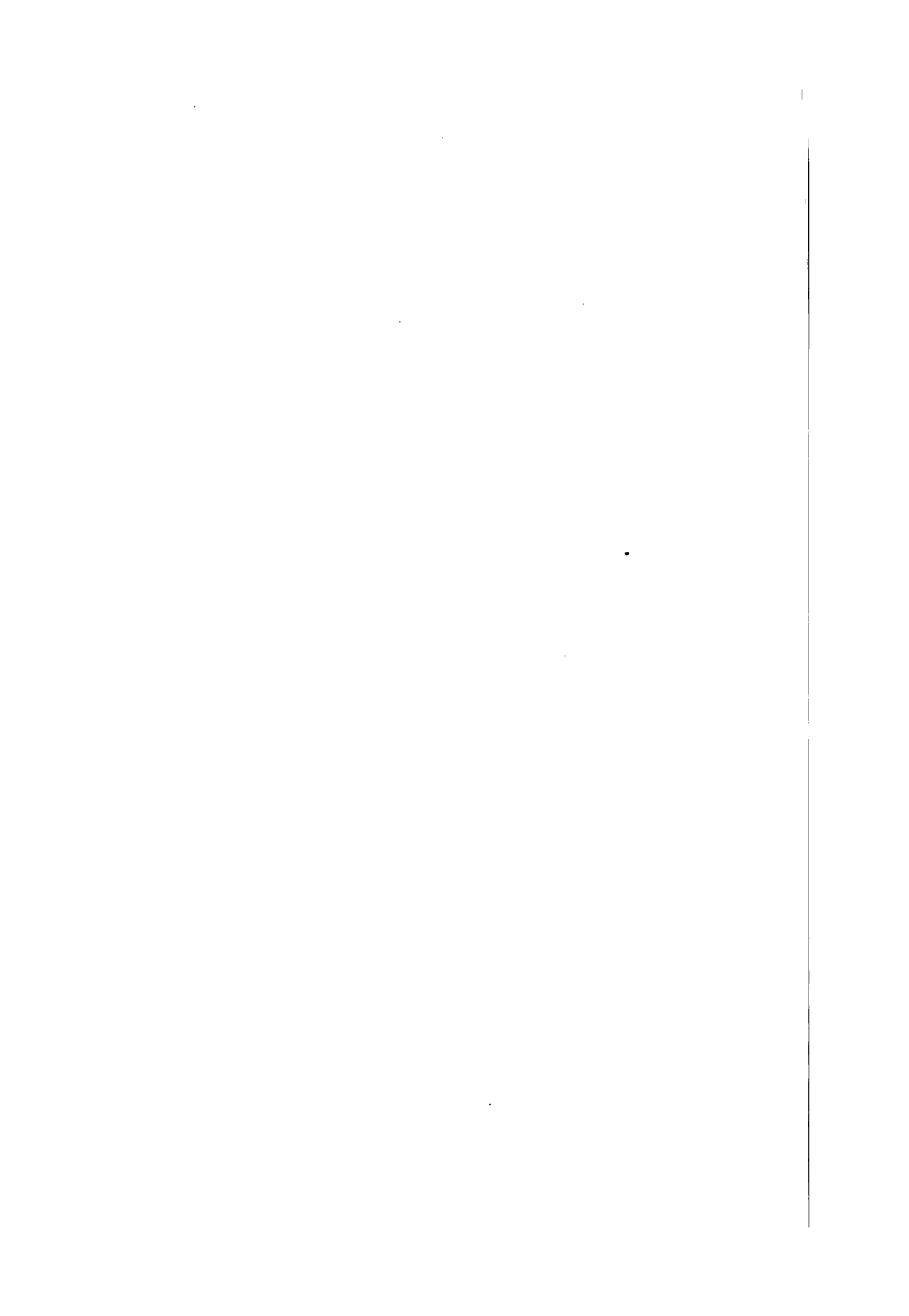
1. The landscapes of forest, shrub, and thicket which for many centuries covered about a third part of England.
2. How one forest was transformed into the present-day counties of Surrey and Sussex, with a part of Kent and a piece of Hampshire. I refer to the Antred of the ancient Britons—Antred, the Uninhabited. This name the Romans Latinised into Anderida Silva, while the Saxons translated it into Andredes-Weald.
3. The results of all the clearing work as seen to-day in the illustrations by Mr. Orrock.

There is a widespread belief at the present time that there was something ideal in the primitive forests of Old England : that they were delightful places for a picnic, charming as the greenwood

PLATE LIII
A MANGOLD FIELD IN SURREY

PLATE LIII
A MANGOLD FIELD IN SURREY





PLACES OF REFUGE

romance in the Robin Hood ballads. This belief is a popular delusion, and it shows very clearly that English historians do not represent past events in relation to definite and true backgrounds.

The primæval forests were horrible during all the worst periods of English history. In Saxon times, and after the Norman Conquest, they were thronged with human criminals and outcasts ; but their most hideous time probably began at the beginning of the fifth century, in the year 410, when the huge army of Roman mercenaries was withdrawn from Britain, leaving the helpless Britons to themselves, emasculated by twenty successive generations of obedience to a military despotism.

As these poor creatures were unfit to bear arms in their own defence, a good many fled from massacre to the forests—"fled into Antred," as our Saxon Chronicle puts it ; they were as safe there as wild animals, and as such they were obliged to live. Out of their sufferings one good thing came. The strongest among them not only survived all hardships ; after many generations, they and the conquering race intermarried, with results very important to the future of England. For the strain of Celtic blood in Englishmen means art and poetry, and it is most evident in those parts of the country which were forests in ancient times. To this point I shall return again ; but let us remember here that Shakespeare's ancestors were all bred and born in the forest lands of central England, where Romanised Britons found shelter from those Teutonic barbarians who formed the Kingdom of Mercia.

OLD ENGLAND

Many Britons were saved in southern England by the Forest of Anderida, a guardian so pitiless that the choice between it and death must have been decided in a panic, on the spur of the moment, I should think. Under the Saxon Conquest there was little to choose between massacre and escape. There was a difference between Nature's cruelty and man's, but it was a difference of kind, not of degree, in the long seasons of those terrific days. Nature's storms, Nature's fens and forests, and her vast moors and heaths, uninhabited and barren, were as sinister and tragic as the once thriving districts over which hordes of Saxons and Angles had passed, leaving behind them a litter of pillaged towns and settlements. These were scenes of war, and they have been equalled in our times in different parts of the world. On the other hand, when we think of present-day England, with her mild, restful landscapes, it is hard to think of Nature as she used to be in this country, sterile, relentless, merciless, and full of transcendent fury.

If any rural scenes appeared as dreadful as the forests, they were those in the desolate and empty fens between the Midlands and East Anglia, stretching on and on for a hundred miles, black, stagnant, fetid, poisonous, overhung with mists, made more desolate by the cries of birds, and more unwholesome by millions of gnats, English mosquitoes, wonderfully effective as stinging agents for the encouragement of infectious diseases. Fens may be called the leprosy of landscapes. Yet they were not worse than the forests, for these had

FORESTS

their own swamps, hidden by shrubs and thickets from the fresh air. They were never purified except by inundations.

The miseries of forest life owed many drenched discomforts to the streams and rivers. After snow-storms and heavy rains, floods were common, and, while cleansing the old swamps, formed new pools and bogs. Trees fell into the beds of streams, and blocked their courses, so the water spread over the ground and saturated the piled-up masses of decayed leaves and plants with which forests were carpeted. Above this vegetable manure a mist gathered, rose up into the trees, and nourished a rank growth of fungi and mosses. An odour of decay, heavy, penetrating, was in the air all the year round. It was the forest atmosphere. The spring months were tainted by it ; the stench was abominable in damp autumns and winters. Each season was, indeed, a charnel time for all the many centuries which had strewn the forests with perished vegetation.

Again, if you think for a moment you will be able to see that the moist carpet of vegetable manure has a tale to tell. Bears can be followed by their spoor ; packs of wolves have trotted up that glade, passed down into the valley, and following its course westward have reached the Roman camp of Anderia (Pevensey), recently taken by the Saxons under Cissa and Aella, and now littered with dead bodies. When the wolves draw near, yelping, the massacred Britons seem to be alive, so thickly are they covered with stoats, rats, and weasels.

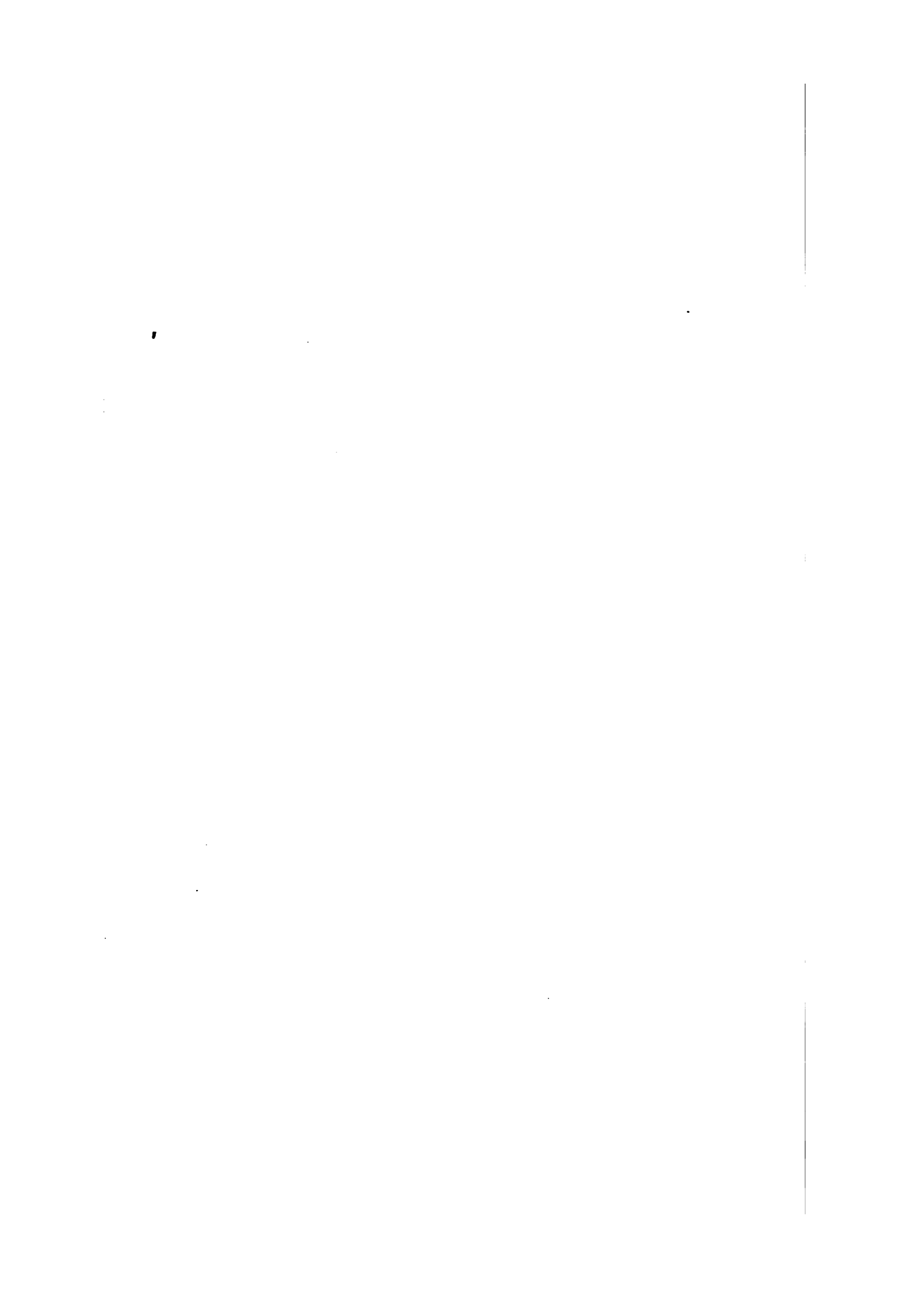
OLD ENGLAND

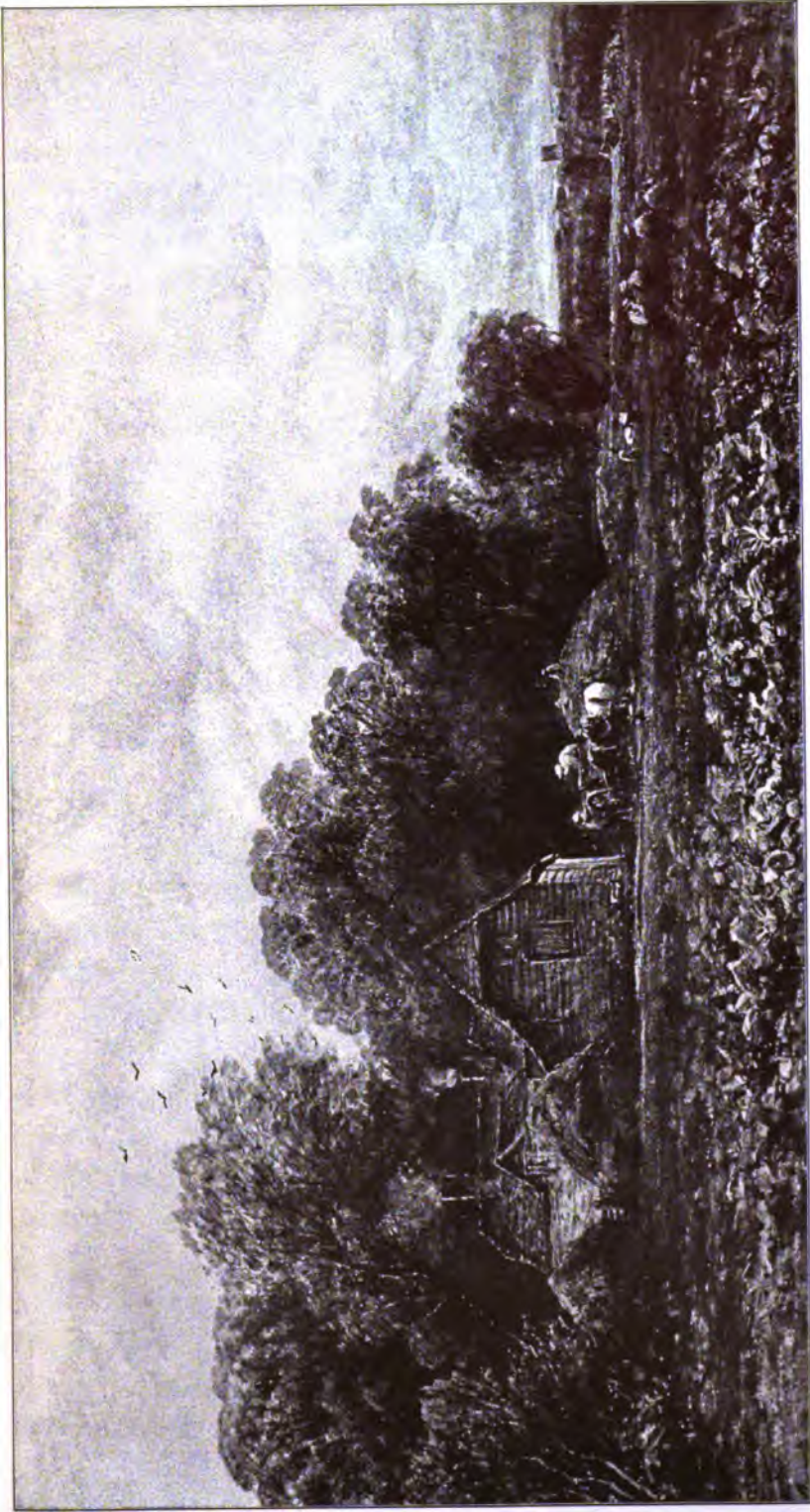
Tragedies of this kind were not rare events under the Saxon Conquest, when the savagery of Nature acted and reacted on the savagery of man. The forests, if we take pains to see them clearly, were a chaos of things in complete antagonism with human comfort and progress. There was harm in their atmosphere, as in that of the fabled upas trees. Over the past of England, from Cæsar's coming to about the fifteenth century, they throw their shadows, their appalling dimness, haunted with folklore superstitions, and peopled with desperate outcasts and outlaws. If these forests were not tragedies, barbarous and immense, I know not what they were.

This, no doubt, is the main fact to be kept in mind when we think of the Anderida Silva, or the great ranges of Sherwood, or those midland forests which dwindled to the Arden of Elizabeth's time, after covering for many and many ages the land now occupied by the counties of Warwick, Worcester, and Stafford. The very meaning of the word *field*—a cleared piece of forest land, a "felled" space—should keep us in mind of the fact that England as we know her was literally hewn out of her primæval woods.

Nevertheless, there are many historians who do not think it worth their while to place the drama of England in its proper setting among the forests, fens, heaths, moors, and rivers. Even Green, who did understand the importance of this landscape background, drew his country scenes with a dull, laboured touch. Other historians have shown how the Saxon invasion was affected by the Romney

PLATE LIV
STACKING MANGOLDS IN SURREY





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MAN'S WAR WITH NATURE

marsh, the Forest of Anderida, and other natural defences. But that is rudimentary: it does not touch the real point, the influence of Nature's savagery over man. When Nature triumphed in England, subduing men to the barest needs of a brute existence, landscapes were teachers of a very formidable kind. Picture those tremendous forests and fens in the fifth century, and imagine what it meant to live close to them, poorly clad, ill-fed, with your mind fevered by war and carnage, and by your Nature-worship as a Saxon. What chance have you when a tempest comes—you, a unit of human weakness face to face with the whole of Nature? Even in the thirteenth century, as Matthew Paris represents many times, Englishmen were terrified by storms, and with reason, for their huts and mills were blown away by scores, like smoke driven here and there by the wind. The wreckage must have been much worse in earlier times, and the people's fear more intense and thrilling. It is odd, therefore, that historians do not lay stress enough on these important things.

In this matter, as in many others, novelists and poets have given useful and necessary lessons to professional historians. Take the example of Victor Hugo, whose romances are brimful of the present subject. The thousandfold conflict of Nature against man, and man against Nature, was to Victor Hugo more interesting and dramatic than any other study. In one book, "Ninety-Three," his background is a marvellous sketch of the Vendean forests; it is put in with superb imaginative genius;

OLD ENGLAND

and Hugo represents in relation to it three types of character in which he makes real his conception of the year 1793. All this should be a help to us, because it applies to our own forests and fens as well as to the grim woods of La Vendée. The following quotation from "Ninety-Three" was translated by Mr. John Morley :

"The forest is barbarous.

"The configuration of the land counsels man in many an act. More than we suppose, it is his accomplice. In the presence of certain savage landscapes, you are tempted to exonerate man and blame creation ; you feel a silent challenge and incitement from Nature ; the desert is constantly unwholesome for conscience, especially for a conscience without light. Conscience may be a giant ; that makes a Socrates or a Jesus : it may be a dwarf ; that makes an Atreus or a Judas. The puny conscience soon turns neptile ; the twilight thickets, the brambles, the thorns, the marsh waters under branches, make for it a fatal haunting place ; amid all this it undergoes the mysterious infiltration of ill suggestions. The optical illusions, the unexplained images, the scaring hour, the scaring spot, all throw man into that kind of affright, half-religious, half-brutal, which in ordinary times engenders superstition, and in epochs of violence, savagery. Hallucinations hold the torch that lights the path to murder. There is something like vertigo in the brigand. Nature with her prodigies has a double effect ; she dazzles great minds, and blinds the duller soul. When man is ignorant, when the

FOREST DWELLERS

desert offers visions, the obscurity of the solitude is added to the obscurity of the intelligence ; thence in man comes the opening of abysses. Certain rocks, certain ravines, certain thickets, certain wild openings of the evening sky through the trees, drive man towards mad or monstrous exploits. We might almost call some places criminal."

Criminal is not the right word, for the impressions we receive from visible things do not create in us anything new : they merely stir into action our native tendencies of mind and character. Still Hugo's meaning is clear. We cannot live in discord with the surroundings of our lot. Our characters are like chameleons, the colour of which changes more or less with the colour of the objects about them, and with their tempers when disturbed and angered. There is always something that seems uncanny, unnatural, in the life of forests, as though Nature rebelled against her own tyranny in hiding a part of herself from the genial sunlight and the spring fields. There is no radiance in the forest depths. Nature reigns there like a despotic sovereign in a darkened hospital of the old times, and therefore unaided by modern science. This seclusion from the full light of day is felt by all forest-dwellers, who long at times for that air which stimulates like wine. Yet the forest-dwellers of to-day choose their own lot, as a rule, while those in mediæval England were outcasts of all kinds, refugees from justice, fugitives from desperate battlefields, runaway serfs, disgraced barons, political scapegoats, footpads, burglars, highway-

OLD ENGLAND

men, murderers, petty thieves of many sorts, priests whom the Church had expelled, monks who had fled from their orders, and persons afflicted with some incurable disease that made them unclean, like leprosy. English forests were hospices to the afflicted, homes to the unlucky, and hiding-places for rogues, vagabonds, and criminals.

At a time when a theft of fourpence would hang a man, as during the reign of Henry III. (1217-1272), forests were attractive to all petty thieves, as well as to the professional scoundrels known to the law as Wastours, Drawlatches, and Roberdesmen. At the close of the thirteenth century, in the reign of Edward I., the law became a trifle more lenient. It was then decreed that a thief should not be hanged by the neck unless he took something worth more than twelve pence, or, in a series of little robberies, did that much harm to the king's liege people. Sharpers, and malefactors of all kinds, remembered the wonderful statecraft in this law, and decided to live moistly in a forest swamp.

At a later time, in the reign of Richard II., certain men of rank formed bands of armed highwaymen, very well fitted to increase the forest population. Their doings are vividly described in a statute of the year 1378. They rode in different parts of the country, seized manors, lands, and other property, made prisoners, and put them to fine and ransom; women and girls were ravished, and taken to strange places; travellers were molested, robbed, and sometimes murdered; the justices in their sessions were afraid, because these

PLATE LV
MANOR FARM NEAR MILFORD IN SURREY



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THE CHURCH AND FORESTS

armed rovers appeared before them in great force, so that "the realm in divers parts was put in great trouble, to the great mischief and grievance of the people."

In the same century, other public misdeeds brought forests into prominence as harbours of refuge. The Church became uneasy about the conduct of her rural priesthood, and legate Otto, holding a council in St. Paul's Cathedral, London, mentioned the vicars, rectors, and clerks who were accused of public immorality, and who deserved to be expelled from their offices. "It has been brought to our notice by several credible persons," said Otto in the year 1237, "that many of the clergy, unmindful of their own salvation, having contracted clandestine marriages, dare to retain possession of the churches after marriage, to acquire ecclesiastical benefices, and to be promoted afresh to holy orders, in opposition to the decrees of the holy canons. Afterwards, in the course of time, it seems to be expedient for the offspring begotten by this marriage, whether the parties themselves are alive or dead, to prove, either by witnesses or by instruments in writing, that such a marriage has been contracted. But because, owing to the clergy being occupied with their marriages or unlawful connection with women, the destruction of souls ensues, their salvation is neglected, and the goods of the Church are plundered, we have decreed, to remedy a disease which has gained such ground, as follows: namely, that if it be discovered that they have thus contracted marriages, they shall be

OLD ENGLAND

entirely deposed from their churches and ecclesiastical benefits, of which we decree that they, as well as any others who are married, shall be *ipso jure* deprived. And if any property shall have been acquired after a marriage of this kind, in whatsoever manner obtained, either by themselves or by means of other persons, from their property, the same shall not on any account be applied for the use of the wives or for the children of such a marriage, but be forthwith devoted to the churches which they held, or in which they held benefices. They themselves, too, as improper persons, shall on no account be admitted to the churches or ecclesiastical benefices, or to holy orders, until by their own deserts a canonical dispensation has been granted them."

Legate Otto then passed on to scandals of a worse type, and said, "that unless clerks, and especially those in holy orders, who publicly keep mistresses in their houses or in those of others, dismiss them therefrom within a month, never again to keep them or others on any account, they shall be suspended from every office and benefice, and, until they shall have made proper atonement for this offence, shall by no means introduce themselves into ecclesiastical benefices; otherwise we have decreed, that they shall be deprived of them. It is our will also, and we strictly order, that the archbishops and bishops shall make diligent inquiries on this matter throughout all their deaneries, and that what we have decreed shall be observed."

FOREST OUTLAWS

These striking pictures, taken from Matthew Paris as translated by the Rev. J. A. Giles, D.C.L. are full of suggestive interest. They have a large charity. Sinners within the Church were to be saved if at all possible, however public their vices may have been ; and the reason of this was humane in a wide sense. Disgraced and expelled, there was little hope for a parish priest or for a monk. It was almost certain that he would drift from bad to worse, become an outlaw, and join the villains in the forests. He might, to be sure, get some occasional work to do as a scribe, for every manor had the year's business set out in a very elaborate statement of accounts ; but churchmen who had disgraced their cloth became objects of public suspicion, and scribes whom the Church had not banned were common everywhere.

All these points had to be considered in the treatment of immoral priests and monks. If they were expelled, the sentence passed upon them was virtually one of outlawry ; and few outlaws ever came back from the forests to civil life.

The State saw to that. Once an outlaw, always an outlaw, was equivalent to saying once a wolf, always a wolf ; for outlaws were described as creatures with wolves' heads, which any one might cut off with impunity. When the king's subjects would not live in accordance with the law, they deserved to be slain outside the law, as though they were dangerous wild animals. These were legal maxims, and perhaps their logic was hard enough to please an ill-paid body of lawyers, whose brains

OLD ENGLAND

were valued at a lower rate than the work of domestic servants in large houses and rich corporations. At a time when the children of college servants became the founders of county families, advocates appear to have received only six-and-eightpence each for conducting their cases. This may account in some measure for the pitiless and harmful logic underlying the mediæval laws. The quality of mercy was strained till it vanished altogether. Famished wretches who took a shilling's worth of food were on a level with organised bands of highwaymen and cutthroats. It is not surprising that forests became public inns for the shreds and patches of fallen humanity.

No exception was made in the case of women. The female outlaw—known as the *weyve*—was common, and there is not a more pitiful figure in English history. Even at this distance of time one is drawn towards her, as though she were living still, abandoned by the State to the vengeance of any one who should meet her in the forests. The story of the *weyve* should be written by Mr. Stanley Weyman. Something of her life may be gathered from the ballad of "The Nut-Brown Maid," one of the most beautiful poems of pre-Elizabethan times. It relates how the Earl of Westmoreland, wishing to test the faith of his betrothed, hides his rank and pretends that he has done some evil deed from the consequences of which we must fly to "the grene wode, alone, a banyshed man." There he will live with his bow, and perhaps be taken and sentenced to death :

PLATE LVI
COTTAGE FARM AT ELSTEAD, SURREY



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THE WOMAN OUTLAW

“ For an outlawe this is the lawe, that men hym take and binde,
Wythout pytee, hanged to bee, and waver with the wynde.”

His betrothed will feel grieved at first, but in a few days she will get rid of her pain. The girl replies that she will go with him. He puts before her all the ills—cold, hunger, poverty, wretchedness of every sort—that she will have to bear in the forest. A bow will be necessary ; she must carry it always in her hand ready to draw : “ and as a thief thus must ye lyve, ever in drede and awe.” Wet or dry, in winter and summer, she will sleep in the open, with no other roof above her than a bush brake, or “ twayne.” Snow, frost, rain, cold, and heat, the deep valleys, the thorny ways, she must be at home with all of them ; let her take heed, even her beautiful long hair must be cut off, for she would not wish it to become unpleasant to her ; and suppose she were to find in the forest a rival, a girl more lovely than herself ? Has he not another sweetheart ? The maid listens ; her heart speaks to her ; she will go into the forest. Then the lover is more than satisfied, and all’s well that ends well.

Forest-dwellers became so numerous and so troublesome that “ Old Father Antic, the Law,” was very much perplexed. In the Statute of Winchester, for instance, which Edward the First sanctioned in 1285, we read how these woodland scamps hid themselves in ditches or in coppices by the roadside, and robbed everybody that passed. Along roads between market towns they were particularly active and dangerous. As a remedy the king ordered that all public ways, for a distance of

OLD ENGLAND

two hundred feet on each side, were to be cleared at once of all things likely to shelter footpads. Large trees might be allowed to stand, but the roads must be made safe at the cost of those who owned the soil. In the event of disobedience to the provisions of this Act, landlords would be held responsible for all murders and robberies. Sometimes a public road crossed a park. In this case the lord had a choice between two lines of action. He could do what the Act commanded, or protect his road by means of walls, or very thick hedges, or very wide ditches. But the owner would be answerable to the king if his safeguards were ineffective. This stringent law was repeated and confirmed by Edward III., and its influence on the park scenery of England must have been important.

We have now seen what English forests were during many centuries. Out of their chaos and primitive dimness the light came at last. Even when they were thronged in their worst parts with refugees, outcasts of all sorts and conditions, some pioneers were at work here and there, clearing away thickets, felling trees, and forming places where swine could feed in safety on acorns and beech-mast. In the Forest of Anderida, the largest forest in England, the clearing work was very slow and difficult ; and even at the present time the only big towns are found along the seaboard. Elsewhere in the old Andredes-weald a town is a small village, with trees clustered about it.

The Anderida Silva is mentioned in the first

ANDERIDA SILVA

chapter, and some information is given there about its size. From Pevensey and Hastings, where it seems to have touched the sea, it grew right across the face of Sussex, far into the heart of Surrey and Hants, and threw out into Kent some fine suburbs of oak and beech and holly. Its length was one hundred and twenty miles, the depth about thirty, and where the trees fringed away in the north, marsh-lands stretched to the Thames valley.

These vast woods were turned into homesteads, and the men who did the work were all of humble origin, patient heroes, of little account in their own day, except as serfs and private soldiers. By far the most important in rank were the Roman legionaries who made camps at Pevensey (Anderia) and Chichester (Regnum), driving roads through the forest to connect these places with London. One road, afterwards called Stane Street, threaded the passes of the Downs near Juniper Hill, ran through Ockley and Bignor, and sped on to its destination at Regnum. In Surrey, again, the Romans built some bridges, like those in Plates 1, 17, and 18. Here and there iron-beds were found and worked; but the forest was too deep and formidable to be attacked in a serious manner. In those days it grew in and out of the deep, water-worn valley now known as the Weald, a valley made innumerable ages ago, when it formed the delta of an immense river, a Ganges of the Secondary times, as Grant Allen described it.

After the Romans left the Britons to their fate, Anderida Silva remained untouched for a long time.

OLD ENGLAND

In its depths many natives found shelter and security, till at last they were able to come out and do business with the Saxons, exchanging skins of wild animals for corn and other delicacies. It is sometimes forgotten that the Saxon ferocity in war was favourable in the long run to trade and commerce. After the most fertile lands along the sea-coast in Sussex had been devastated, a choice had to be made between famine and some kind of ordered life ; and we have already seen (p. 108) how Wilfrid of York took advantage of this fact in his dealings with the Sussex men at Selsey. For three years there had been no rain in those parts, and the poor Saxons, driven to desperation by famine, had made up their minds to bind themselves together in groups of thirty or forty and to throw themselves into a flood tide. It was then that Wilfrid appeared on the scene, and prevented this wholesale suicide by teaching the Saxons how to fish in the sea. Their king, Edilwalch, was the first Christian ruler over Sussex. He was succeeded by his two brothers, Berthun and Authun, who reigned jointly as kings of the South Saxons until they were beaten by the people of Wessex ; and Sussex remained part of Wessex till Egbert became " King of all England."

If you turn to Plates 20 and 26, giving admirable pictures of two ancient churches, one at Old Shoreham, the other at Sompting, you will see what the Saxons did in the Andredes-weald after Christianity and a love of gain in commerce had tamed them a little. The date of Sompting Church

PLATE LVII
THE OUTER PARK AT ARUNDEL IN
SUSSEX





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SAXON AND CELT

is unknown ; but the tower is of Saxon origin ; and some other parts, like the pilaster strips and some triangular windows, are among the finest relics we possess of Saxon design and workmanship. Long before Sompting Church was built, within two miles of Worthing, the men of Sussex were civilised enough to live at peace with the Celtic refugees in the forest; and this to my mind is the most noteworthy point in the history of the Andredesweald. That the Britons and Saxons intermarried is proved by the Celtic traits of character and feature to be found among peasants in Sussex and Surrey ; and to this blend of races may be attributed a peculiar grace in the styles of domestic architecture that grew up in forest clearings. This may be questioned, but it can't be gainsaid, I believe.

In any case, the clearing work went on, the swineherd being the first pioneer under the Saxons. What manner of man was he ? As costume changed very little among labourers in early times, we may take the swineherd in "Ivanhoe" as representing our pioneer, a man wild of aspect, savage, and dressed in a close jacket with sleeves, rudely made from the skin of some animal, but with the hair rubbed off in so many places that none could say now to what creature the fur had belonged. "This primæval vestment reached from the throat to the knees, and served at once all the usual purposes of body clothing ; there was no wider opening at the collar than was necessary to admit the passage of the head, from which it may be inferred that it was put on by slipping it over the head and shoulders,

OLD ENGLAND

in the manner of a modern shirt, or ancient hauberk. Sandals, bound with thongs made of boar's hide, protected the feet, and a roll of thin leather was twined artificially round the legs, and, ascending above the calf, left the knees bare, like those of a Scottish Highlander. To make the jacket sit yet more close to the body, it was gathered at the middle by a broad leathern belt, secured by a brass buckle; to one side of which was attached a sort of scrip, and to the other a ram's horn, accoutred with a mouth-piece, for the purpose of blowing. In the same belt was stuck one of those long, broad, sharp-pointed, and two-edged knives, with a buck's-horn handle, which were fabricated in the neighbourhood, and bore even at this early period the name of a Sheffield whittle. The man had no covering upon his head, which was only defended by his own thick hair, matted and twisted together, and scorched by the influence of the sun into a rusty dark-red colour, forming a contrast with the over-grown beard upon his cheeks, which was rather of a yellow or amber hue. One part of his dress only remains, but it is too remarkable to be suppressed; it was a brass ring, resembling a dog's collar, but without any opening, and soldered fast round his neck, so loose as to form no impediment to his breathing, yet so tight as to be incapable of being removed, excepting by the use of the file. On this singular gorget was engraved in Saxon characters an inscription of the following purport: 'Gurth, the son of Beowulph, is the born thrall of Cedric of Rotherwood.'

THE SWINEHERD

Gurth belonged to Sherwood Forest, but the type of man was probably the same in the Andredesweald, though in the Kentish part of the forest the collar of serfdom would have been unnecessary, because labourers in Kent seem to have been free. They were so in later times, when serfs were common in other parts of England. To have been born in that county, says Thorold Rogers, and to prove one's birth there, was a bar to the proceedings by which a lord claimed the recovery of his serf. "In the many accounts which I have read from the county of Kent, there is no trace of the serf-tenure or of the serf." So we may believe that a Kentish swineherd did not wear a brass collar around his neck, like Gurth in "Ivanhoe."

Some persons suppose that when the swineherd began his work in the Forest of Anderida he followed the Roman highways, the Stane Street and the Well Street; but these roads went through dangerous parts of the forest, while Gurth, not wishing to lose his swine, kept to the outskirts, and particularly to the clumps of beech and oak in Kent. His swine-pastures were known as *dens*, and some among them, in course of time, developed into woodland villages, like Newenden, Horsemondon, Smarden, Benenden, and other places in Kent which have names ending with *den*. Near Kent, in South-East Sussex, the swineherd left his mark at Playden and Iden; and, following the border north, at Cottenden. On the west, near Hampshire, we find North Marden, West Marden and East Marden. This pioneer wrote his

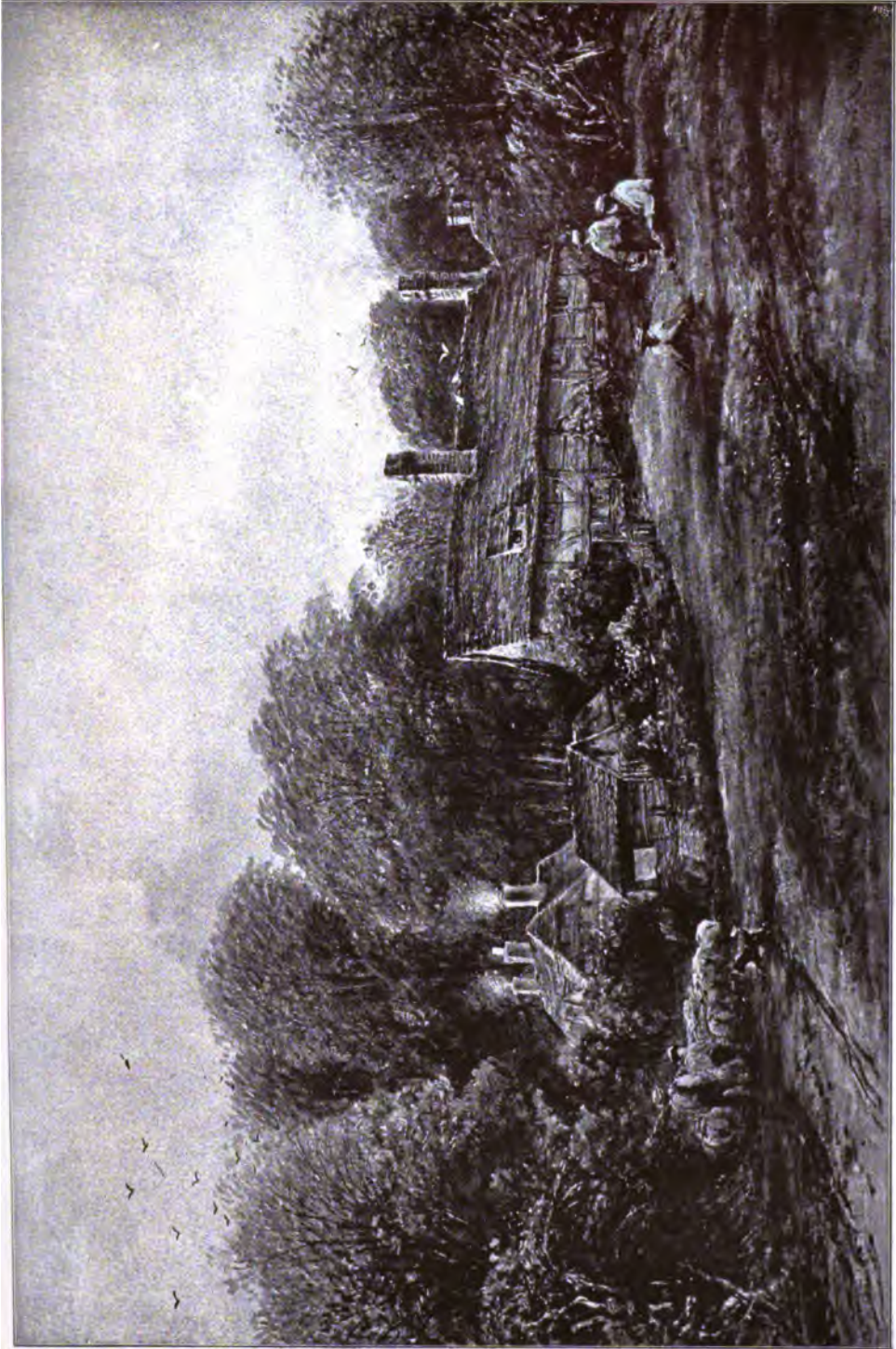
OLD ENGLAND

chronicle very plainly in the place-names of the Andredes-weald, his favourite resort being the Kentish midlands.

The conquest of the forest depths was begun by woodcutters, who made the fields, and the *leys* also, forest glades freed from undergrowth and warmed by the sun, where cattle grazed. It is a romance to follow his progress in village names. To give just a few examples, Sussex has Uckfield, Mayfield, Lindfield, Nutley, Amberley, Shipley, and many more.

From drawings in ancient manuscripts we may get some idea of the men and their forest-craft. Here on my desk is a woodland scene in the reign of Edward IV. Three trees are represented, and upon the tallest one in the centre of the drawing two woodcutters are busy, hewing with all their might and main, for there was no trade union in their time. They are bearded fellows, dressed in a kind of shirt with long sleeves, not unlike a jersey. Their legs seem to be naked, but their feet are shod, and thick aprons hang about their waists. They work with axes having short handles and large blades, shaped like open fans. All the lower branches have been lopped off the trees—a custom that served two purposes: it supplied fuel and timber, and trees in a forest were brought more easily to the ground after their branches had been lopped. The origin of this trimming method in wood-craft had much in common with the origin of shaving among those prehistoric races who engraved their hunting exploits on pieces of bone in the cave-

PLATE LVIII
ROADSIDE FARM AT WITLEY IN SURREY



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WOODCUTTERS, DROVERS

districts of Perigord. One bone-engraving shows that hunters shaved their heads, and this fact is explained by the way in which they stalked their game. Having little confidence in their feeble weapons, they crawled through the brushwood as near as they could get to their prey; long hair interfered with these tactics, as it got entangled in twigs and briars; and for this reason it was shaved. Similarly, branches were cut off in English forests, because they got interlocked with neighbouring boughs when a tree was felled.

After the woodcutters began their work in the Andredes-weald, another kind of pioneer came, the drover, the herdsman, who perfected some of the leys and fields, and made them into folds, or fenced and enclosed pastures. Thus we have the following place-names in Sussex and Surrey:

Frithfold	Slinfold
Hadfold	Kingsfold
Cowfold	Alfold
Wolderingfold	Chiddingfold
Dunnsfold	Paddingfold

Anderida Silva was being conquered, though the hamlets were nothing more than small clusters of rude huts. The great *hursts* and *charts* remained, those portions of the forest which had not been touched by woodmen; but even these were to be made hospitable to man, as many towns and villages now bear witness, like Midhurst, Coneyhurst, Ewhurst, Sandhurst, Hawkhurst, Holmwood, Charlwood, and many other forest-named places,

OLD ENGLAND

that suggest to our minds the presence of squirrels, woodpeckers, and other things arboreal.

Nevertheless, the greatest change in the forest had yet to come. It was the greatest change, because it brought wealth, and beautiful manor-houses, handsome rural churches, and cottages and farms so perfect in their own way that they made an era in village architecture, a period not to be equalled by imitations nor matched in the country homes of any other nation. This prosperity began under the Tudors, with the rediscovery of the Weald iron-beds. The ore was found in the greensand hills, and also to a large extent in the bands of clay-ironstone which ran through the Ashburnham Beds division of the Hastings Sand. "At a period when coal was not yet mined," wrote Grant Allen, (*English Illustrated Magazine*, 1888-89), "the proximity of the forest, with its abundant charcoal supply, to the ore of the hillsides, gave unusual opportunities for the primitive mode of smelting. During the Tudor period, accordingly, furnaces and ironworks began to spring up all over the Weald. The Forest of Anderida set up afresh as an incipient Black Country. The *hammer-ponds* which occur abundantly in every part of this region were heads of water used to work the forges; the best known instances are at the Thursley hammer-ponds and at Abinger Hammer. During these palmy days of the Weald industry, iron made the fortune of more than one Elizabethan family. Great mansions of the sixteenth and seventeenth century lie thick upon the soil. Villages and towns of a

IRON IN THE WEALD

small sort began to cover the ground, and stately manor-houses rose among the glades and dens so long given over to the brock and the crane, or to the swineherd and the drover. Even the tombstones in the churches were made of cast-iron, as one may still see in the chancel at Crowhurst."

It was the iron industry that completed the heroic work so long carried on by the earlier pioneers. The principal centres from which its wealth circulated through the Weald were Penhurst, Ashburnham, Mayfield, Buxted, Maresfield, and one place in Kent, Lamberhurst. At Buxted, in the year 1543, Ralph Hogge made the first English cannon which was cast in one solid piece and hooped. To heat all the Weald furnaces, many *hursts* and *charts* were cut down; at last the country people became alarmed, their woods disappeared with such rapidity, and in the sixteenth century they raised an outcry over their denuded forest lands. Some efforts seem to have been made to stop the ironworks, but trade was too brisk for that, and its money too useful. Little by little, but not so rapidly as some writers believe, the iron industry passed from the Weald into Staffordshire and to the north of England, where ironstone and coal were to be found in the same districts, and therefore conveniently near each other. Still, the Weald men made a jolly good fight, one furnace at Ashburnham surviving to the year 1828.

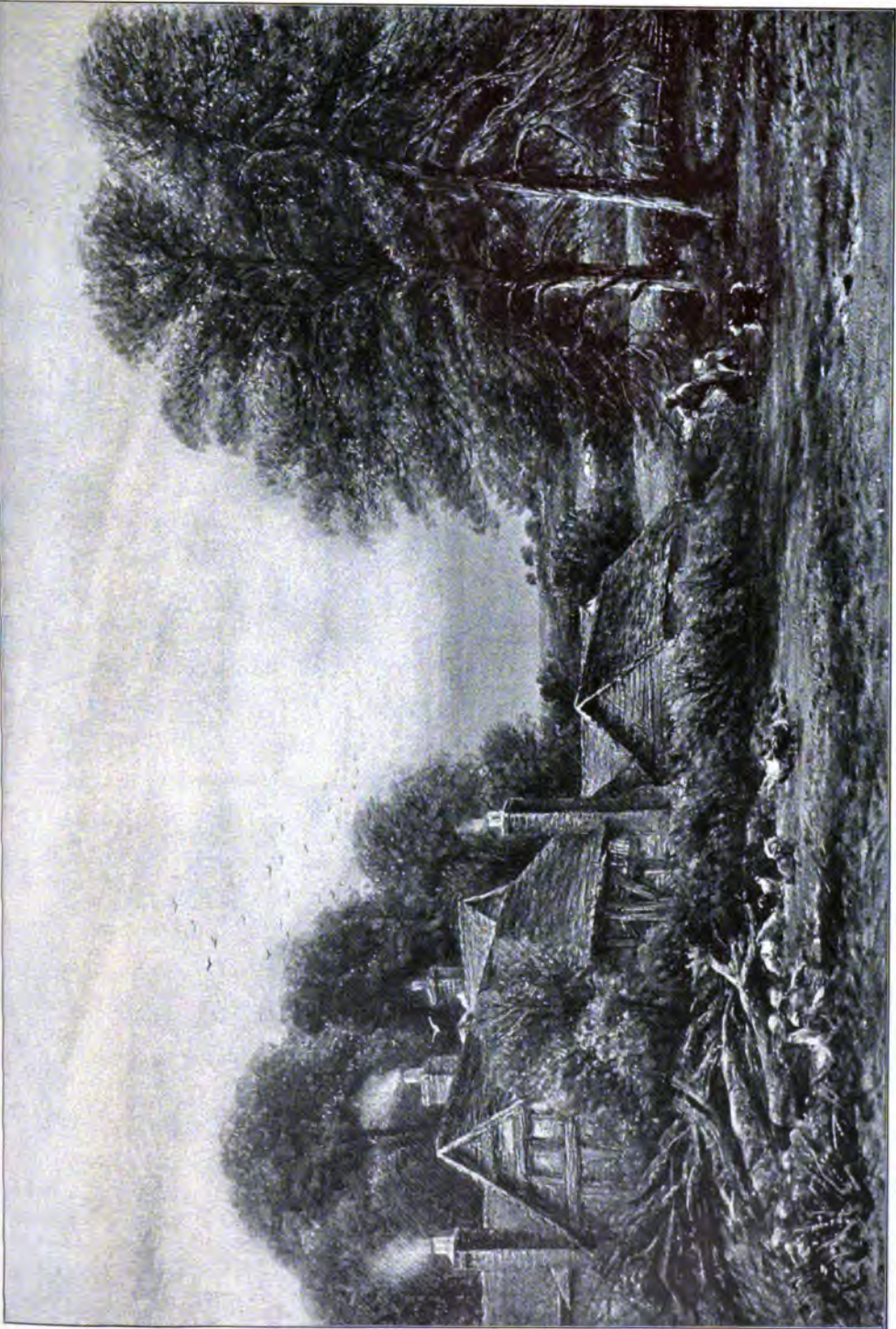
The story is told. Time and man subdued the Forest of Anderida. No longer could it be called Antred, the Uninhabited. Though subdued, the

OLD ENGLAND

forest was not obliterated. Lovely woods remained ; and to drive through Sussex and Surrey to-day is to be in a grey paradise of *hursts* checkered with leas, wolds, parks, fields, commons, village greens, and tiny cricketers, lads of five, but with more confidence than their county elevens. As to the old villages, they gleam like copper, spotted with the green rust of verdigris ; grey stones being covered with rich brown lichens, and stained with patches of moss, green and wet. But, unhappily, these wonderful old places are no longer what they were twenty years ago. One by one the romantic homesteads and cottages disappear under the influence of my lord the jerry-builder ; traditional ways of work, slowly gathered together by the old-time masons, have gone where the old moons go ; and the day will come when this village part of our domestic architecture will survive only in pictures, like those by Mr. Orrock, Mr. W. Biscombe Gardner, and Birket Foster.

Each of these men of genius has a manner of his own, in the medium of which he has given us certain qualities not to be met with in any other painter's work. They belong, these qualities, not to mere skill of hand, not to practice and teaching, but to a unique sympathy of vision, innate in the eye and mind, just as distinguishing notes in the *timbre* of all human voices are innate and unique. There are few things quite so valuable as a natural gift of registering sight, of artistic vision ; and you will find that the only observation in literature and in art that keeps fresh and lasting is entirely

PLATE LIX
FARM ON THE WOLD, WITLEY, SURREY



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RUSTIC ART

instinctive, spontaneous, unsought, not conscious of itself.

The art of Birket Foster was disliked by many painters of his own time, who found in its ballad-like rusticity far too much daintiness ; but Foster has outlived nearly all his critics, just because he followed his inclinations, and did spontaneously his best within the range of his inborn sympathies. Mr. Biscombe Gardner has much in common with Mr. Orrock. He sees a building with the precision of an architect, and is always able to suggest the substance and the weight of things. This has ever been one of the strong points in Mr. Orrock's water-colours ; and in all forms of painting it is a rare quality. To convey by means of colour on a flat surface the weight of heavy objects, solid things standing on the solid earth, is so difficult that many artists evade it altogether, and give you a cathedral with as much weight as a baby's cradle. Their trees have no more substance than a whiff of smoke, and they like a uniformity of depth in all skies and in all waters. One day critics will become sensitive to these matters, and many stock opinions will then be reversed. Take as an example the water-colours by Turner. There is no weight of style in those belonging to his later periods, while his earlier drawings are full of it ; and the reason is that Turner, becoming insensitive to the general majesty and bulk of nature, concerned himself at last solely with the problems of iridescent light. That he solved each problem is certain, but he missed that infinite variety of substance which accompanies the infinity

OLD ENGLAND

of Nature's light. His later work in water-colour is full of aërial magic, while his early drawings are much more faithful to nature as a whole.

Mr. Orrock's feeling for light and air is akin to that of De Wint, and David Cox, and Thomas Girtin. Here, if I may use a metaphor, the notes and chords in Nature's harmonies of colour are all used in a given key, without any attempt to make the key higher than is usual in country scenes. Raise the key, and you intensify the light in your picture, but there is a very evident loss of substance inside your luminous atmosphere: solid objects look vague and thin, like dreams of a fairy place.

These technical matters are mentioned here because Mr. Orrock's weight of style springs from the pleasure he takes in being loyal to familiar truths. For this chapter he has chosen a series of nine pictures that give an excellently varied notion of the work done by the pioneers. Plates 53 and 54, for example, suggests with accuracy the outgrowth of farms from the Anderida ranges in the Surrey Weald. Plate 53 has for its subject a Mangold Field, with women and men at work, a small farm sheltered under trees in the distance, a wreath of smoke rising from its chimney against a woody upland. Then there is Plate 57, a lovely pastoral view in Sussex, showing the outer park of Arundel. This water-colour has a lyric charm, with a well-accented cadence, and with happy rhymes of colour and form. A meadow under the hill is the brightest passage in the picture; from it all half-tones and shadows radiate; and in order that this meadow

COTTAGES AND FARMS

may be full of sunshine and yet unobtrusive, the light is repeated with great skill in the foreground, where two flocks of sheep are dappled by it. A distant village overhung with smoke answers the same purpose. Nothing could be better than this picture as a contrast to the many centuries of toil that won from the forest so much pastoral quietness.

As to the drawings of cottages and farms, they have a rustic simplicity, and illustrate very well the results of the work done by swineherds, woodcutters, and drovers. This means that they denote the progress of farming in the cleared forest lands. They were not much affected by the iron industry, that produced country-houses different in type, more expensive to build, and having in their manner the well-bred ease of a country gentleman with a good balance at his bank. Homes of this kind, restful with an Elizabethan stateliness, or decked out with Jacobean oriel windows and great clustered chimney-stacks, were built at Abinger Hammer, Capel, Westcott, Ockley, Shere, Ewhurst, and Holmwood.

The more modest houses, those that speak to us of field labour because they are peasant-bred, have a wide range of individual taste and fancy; and this gives to their family likeness a never-ending interest, as attractive in its own way as the air of old-time squirehood that lingers about the manor-houses where rich ironmasters lived. Mr. Orrock's favourite sketching-grounds in Surrey are in the neighbourhoods of Witley, Elstead, and

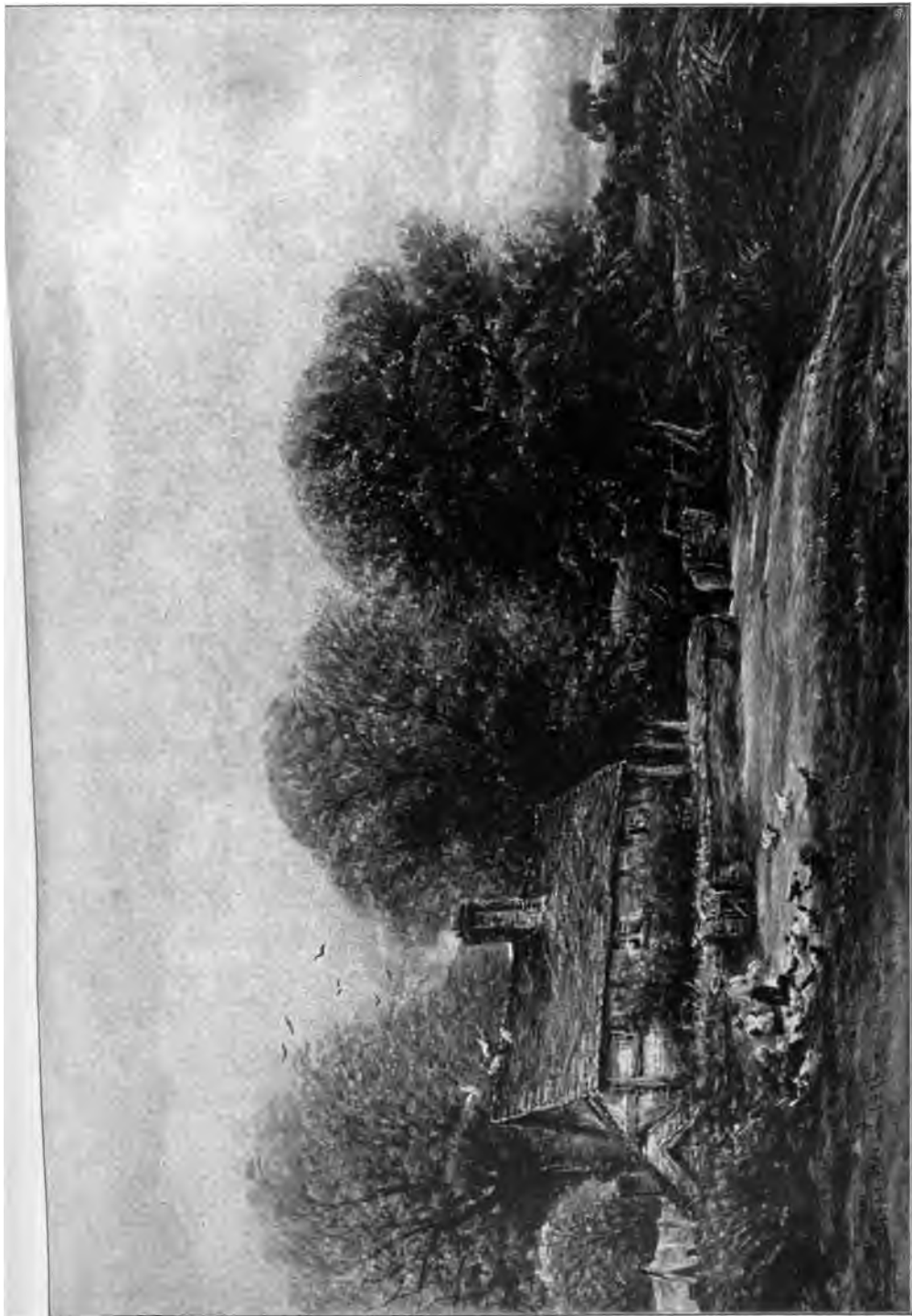
OLD ENGLAND

Milford—delightful villages. To this day they have kept their ancient custom of living well at a small cost, and of treating guests like kings. They know the meaning of the word home, have a ripe opinion of themselves, and care no more about London than I do for the North Pole. Each village is a world, and to live there as a painter is to enjoy life in the world.

Plate 61 represents Witley village, with its grey old manor standing by the roadside, on guard there day after day for hundreds of years, a sentinel ever watchful over its camp. This manor is close to the church, in a position usually chosen for the principal house in ancient villages. Sometimes the church and its graveyard were within the lord's private grounds; and this may have been the case at Witley when it first grew out of the forest, a cluster of little rude huts and cabins like those of the ancient Britons, conical in shape, built of timber, mud and turf, and having in the centre of each roof a hole to let in light, and to emit smoke from the embers of a wood fire burning on a clay hob inside the one small room. This was the Saxon Witley, a settlement where perhaps a single family lived on a hide of land (forty acres), or where all the families of one kin united their allotments, forming a little "mark" or "township," so called from the "tun" or enclosure surrounding the group of homes. The name Witley proves that the forest at this point was cleared by woodcutters; and it is interesting to note that the type of hut which I have just described was useful

PLATE LX
COTTAGE HOME AT WITLEY IN SURREY





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WITLEY VILLAGE

enough to be retained by charcoal-burners, among whom it has lived on to our day, for Mr. Orrock came upon it in Sherwood Forest some few years ago. At what time it came into vogue among the ancient Britons I do not know, but excavations have given to this cone-shaped hut a date very much older than Cæsar's arrival in Britain.

From that distant epoch we follow its traditions back to Witley, there to see how a Saxon mark or tunship became a manor, yet remained, with some modifications, a Teutonic settlement of the sixth century. The country parish kept that characteristic till late in the middle ages; and even to-day we are reminded of it by the pride of village folk, their local self-importance, the feeling they have that their little world is a pattern to all others. With this persistent feeling as guardian, a Teutonic settlement changed little in essentials. The chief difference of all was made by the coming of Christianity. A church was built, very often by the head man of the district. In the days of Archbishop Theodore, between the years 668 and 690, nobles and simple freemen, the eorls and ceorls, were encouraged to mark out parishes; for the English parochial system was born then, with the perpetual patronage of livings. So let us suppose that Witley was reclaimed from the forest in the time of Theodore, and that some noble or other endowed the church and remained patron of the advowson :

And there he built with wattles from the marsh
A little lonely church in days of yore.

These beautiful lines from Tennyson refuse to be

OLD ENGLAND

forgotten at this point; they come singing back into one's memory, turning settlements into parishes, transforming Nature-worship into Christianity; and when we turn from this picture to the sympathetic water-colour by Mr. Orrock we are face to face with all that a parish church means in the history of English rural life, the bells of a village church having rung over the same thing century after century: the same origin from rude huts in a clearing, the same Teutonic conservatism, the same basis of family life as the mainstay of established order and system.

The age of the present manor house at Witley is lost in alterations, but the style has Tudor characteristics here and there, with changes much later in date. The porch, small and feeble, is comparatively modern, and quite out of scale with the building as a whole. Still, the foundation is coeval with Witley itself.

Plate 59—the Farm on the Wold, near Witley—is one of those scattered homesteads which represent, in rural English architecture, the genius of haphazard. A farm was rarely put together all at the same time, and in accordance with a definite plan. It grew bit by bit, throwing out a new wing here, a new byre there; a chimney was added in some unusual place, or perhaps a thatched roof seemed too cottage-like to a yeoman's wife, so one of tiles displaced it. And yet, somehow, in whatever way this growth showed itself piecemeal, the results were nearly always good, in quaint harmony with the countryside and with the original farm.

VILLAGE MASONS

This proves that country masons, though seldom known outside their villages, were architects with a rare feeling for harmony and proportion. In their minds many generations of traditions were stored, ready to be used again at a moment's notice. Village masons had no long row of letters to put after their names—F.R.I.B.A., and so forth; but they were masters of their craft, and F.R.I.B.A.s are now their pupils and imitators. When a mind is enriched with craft traditions which a system of apprenticeship has formed and preserved, it is educated in a way that school-boards will never equal. As art guilds on the Continent were great encouragers of noble work, producing masterpieces in painting and sculpture, unmatched to this day, so guilds of masons in England made our country the acknowledged leader in all matters of domestic architecture. English homes stand apart from all others, strong, simple, and refined, often with a touch of quaintness in their quiet manner.

This, no doubt, is one thing to be learnt from Mr. Orrock's pictures of rustic homes. And in Plate 59 we may watch the masons at work. In this farm the oldest part is the building behind the logs; here the rough timber-work may have belonged to an early Tudor farm. The first roof was thatched, with straw, reeds, or bracken: this may be read in the slope, which is clearly that of a thatching. A covering of tiles was preferred at a later time, perhaps in the seventeenth century, when some structural change inside the farm brought about the present positions of the two

OLD ENGLAND

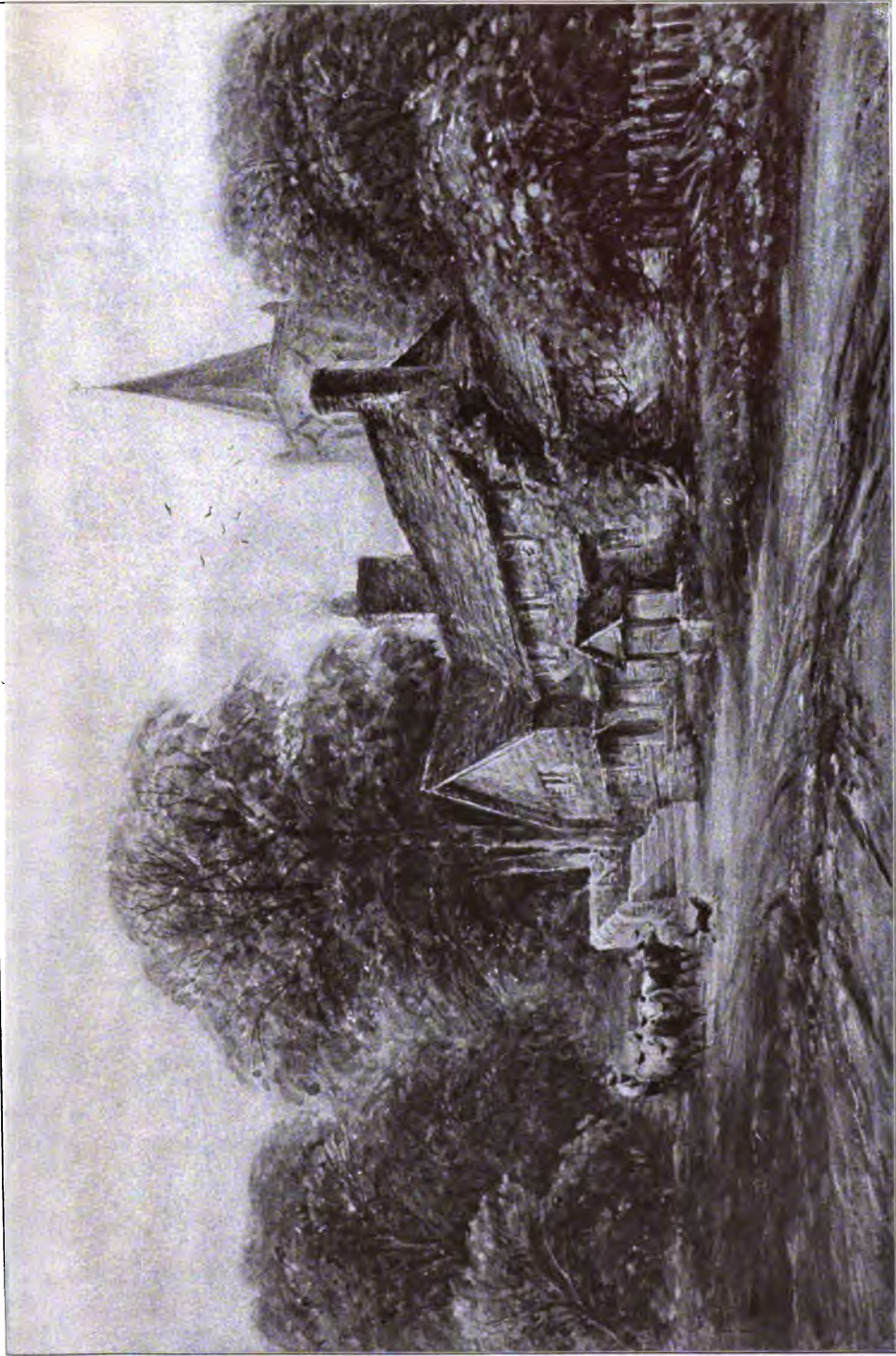
chimneys, which would look amiss were it not for the group of buildings behind, and a little outhouse on the right-hand side of the picture.

Many cottages in Sussex and Surrey were built for thatches, and not for the moss-grown tiles so familiar to us now. When that is so, the finest quality of our English tiled roof is absent ; we do not then feel that masons learnt this part of their craft from mushrooms and fungi. Nature has had more to do with the origin and progress of building than learned writers are willing to see or to admit. Fungi and mushrooms give many lessons in the design of steeples, domes, and roofs. Study, for example, the charming cottage-farm in Plate 56, with the cabbage garden in the foreground, and the screen of friendly trees behind, all expressed by a hand of uncommon sureness and resource. It is characteristic of Mr. Orrock that in drawings where some form of architecture plays a chief part he seems in his technique to build with a mason's skill and knowledge. The clustered chimney-stack in this drawing is Jacobean ; its spring from the roof is easy, natural, well-balanced ; and the roof itself looks inevitable, like the tapering dome of some tall fungus. Very few architects of our time manage their roofs with sufficient care. They break them up, destroying the unity of effect which a roofing ought always to have, as in the work, for example, of Mr. E. L. Lutyens.

Ruskin has a fine passage on roofs in his "Lectures on Architecture and Painting," and I conclude this chapter with a quotation from it :

PLATE LXI
WITLEY MANOR HOUSE AND CHURCH





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ABOUT ROOFS

“ I am sure that all of you must readily acknowledge the charm which is imparted to any landscape by the presence of cottages; and you must over and over again have paused at the wicket-gate of some cottage garden, delighted by the simple beauty of the honeysuckle porch and latticed window. Has it ever occurred to you to ask the question, what effect the cottage would have upon your feelings if it had *no roof*? no visible roof, I mean;—if instead of the thatched slope, in which the little upper windows are buried deep, as in a nest of straw—or the rough shelter of its mountain shales—or warm colouring of russet tiles—there were nothing but a flat leaden top to it, making it look like a large packing-case with windows in it? I don't think the rarity of such a sight would make you feel it to be beautiful; on the contrary, if you think over the matter you will find that you actually do owe, and ought to owe, a great part of your pleasure in all cottage scenery, and in all the inexhaustible imagery of literature which is founded upon it, to the conspicuousness of the cottage roof—to the subordination of the cottage itself to its covering, which leaves, in nine cases out of ten, really more roof than anything else. It is, indeed, not so much the white-washed walls, nor the flowery garden, nor the rude fragments of stones set for steps at the door, nor any other picturesqueness of the building which interests you, so much as the grey bank of its heavy eaves, deep-cushioned with green moss and golden stonecrop. And there is a profound, yet evident, reason for this feeling.

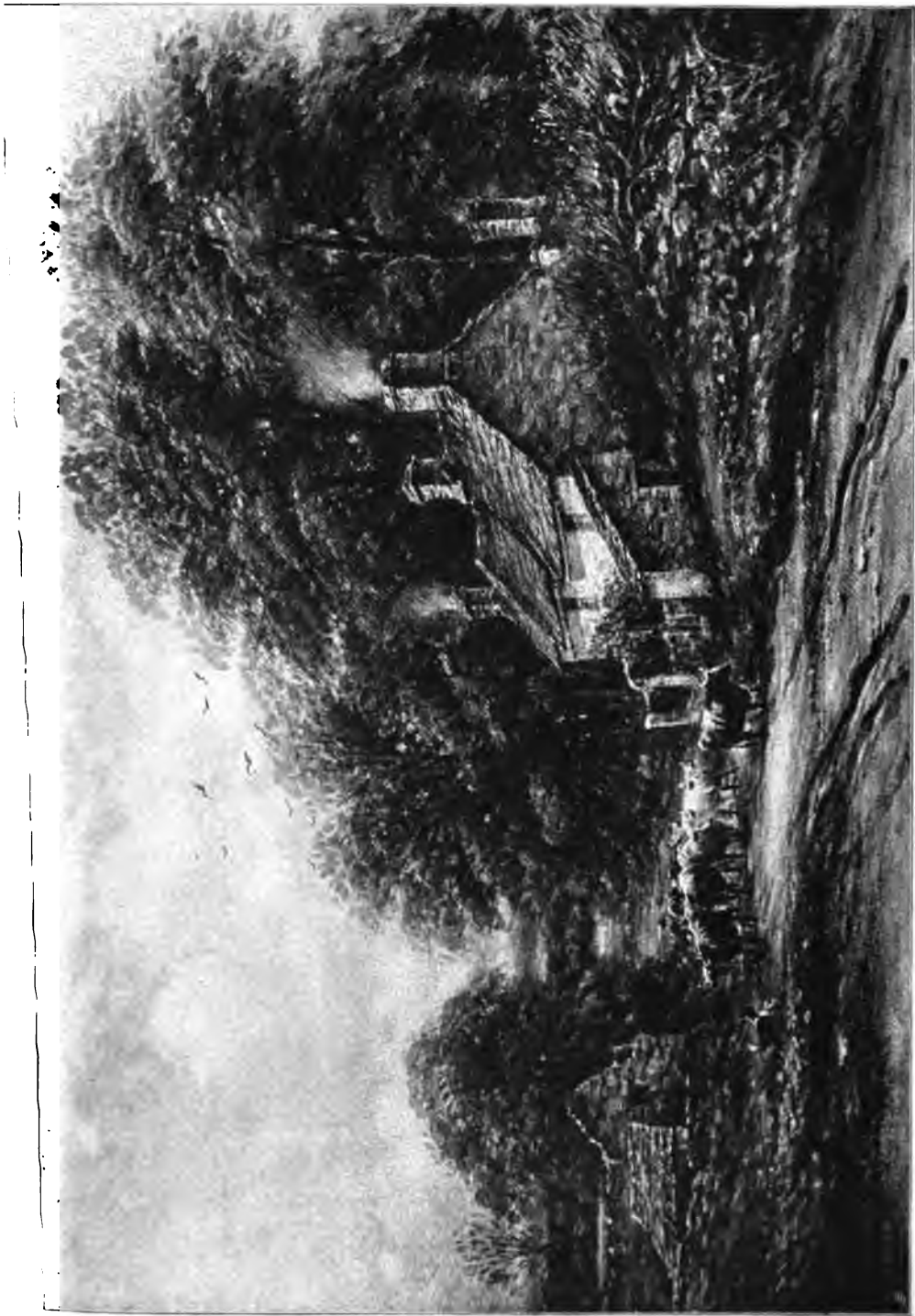
CHAPTER VII

ARCHERY IN THE CLEARED FOREST LANDS

ROGER ASCHAM (1515–1568), reader to Queen Elizabeth, and the principal teacher of Lady Jane Grey, wrote the first good book on archery. He called it “Toxophilus, the Schole or Partitions of Shooting contayned in two bookes, pleasant for all Gentlemen and Yomen of England for theyr pastime to reade.” Written in the year 1544, it issued from the press in 1571, “at London in Fleet Streete neare to St. Dunstones Church,” Thomas Marshe being the printer. There are many who believe that Ascham was first in the field. But this was not quite his luck. “The Boke Named The Governour,” by Sir Thomas Elyot, Knight, published in 1531, had recognised “that shotyng in a long bowe was the principall of all other exercise”; and it was reprinted in 1546, 1547, 1564, and 1580.

But Ascham’s “Toxophilus” comes easily first in merit as a thorough study of the most important national sport in all the range of English history. Henry VIII. gave the author a pension of £10 a year, and this honour was confirmed by Edward VI. Both kings took a keen personal delight in archery,

PLATE LXII
COTTAGES AT AYSGARTH IN YORKSHIRE



ST. LOUIS
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JAN 10 1892

ENGLISH ARCHERS

and longed to see it restored to its old-time place at the head of all European agencies of war. It is not too much to say that English archers of the best periods were unrivalled soldiers, whose achievements were at once the terror and the admiration of their foes. They were beaten from time to time, as at Bannockburn, but never when they were commanded by a general of ability who knew how to make use of their inimitable courage and skill. Philippe de Comines (1445-1509) summed up the opinion which he and other Frenchmen had formed of English bowmen: "*Milice redoutable! la fleur des archiers du monde.*"

History speaks of these men as a whole: only a few are mentioned by name. Leland tells a good story of John Pearson, a Coventry archer, who had one of his legs shattered by a cannon-ball at the battle of Dixemunde, yet managed to use his bow either kneeling or sitting; and when the French took to flight, turning to a comrade, he said: "Have these three arrows which remain, and continue thou the chase, for I may not." Sir Walter Scott preserved for us the name of Wat Tinlinn, who in Scott's young days was the theme of many a fireside tale in the Border country. Carew, the old historian of Cornwall, mentions Richard Arundel, who could shoot twelvescore yards over his shoulder, with the right hand or the left. Another Cornish Bowman, Robert Bone, "shot at a little bird sitting on his cow's back, and killed it—the bird, I mean, not the cow—which was very cunning in the performance, or very foolish in the

OLD ENGLAND

attempt." Shakespeare tells us, in a speech by Benedict, that the name of one archer was used in old times as a compliment. "He that hits me, let him be clapped on the shoulder and called Adam." This bowman is referred to also in the following ballad :

Merry it was in fair forest,
Among the leaves green ;
Where as our men hunt east and west,
With bows and arrows keen,
To ryse the deare out of their den,
Such sights hath oft been sene,
As bye three men of the north countrie,
By them it is I mene.
The one of them, hight Adam Bell,
The other, Clym of the Clough,
The third was William of Cloudeslie,
An archere good enow.

The North Country was always famous for its bowmen, so I give two illustrations to represent Yorkshire and Cumberland. The Midlands also were excellent recruiting grounds, and two beautiful pictures typify the cleared forest lands in that part of England. "The Elm Tree Inn, on the Trent, Nottinghamshire," Plate 66, is probably as old as James II; while the "View near Woodhouse, Leicestershire," with the village in the distance, and the road bordered on one side by pines, belongs to the Charnwood Forest country.

Other counties were specially noted for their bowmen, Cornwall and Cheshire taking a high rank; it was from Cheshire that Richard II. recruited his Archers of the Guard. In Weber's tale of Flodden

ARCHERS

Field, Lancashire and Cheshire are placed on the same level of excellence :

My Lancashire most lovely wights,
And chosen men of Cheshire strong ;
From sounding bows your feathered flights
Let fiercely fly your foes among.

The Lancashire lads,

A stock of striplings, stout of heart,
Brought up from babes with beef and bread,

came

From Warton unto Warrington,
From Wigan unto Waresdale ;
From Wedicar to Waddington,
From Old Ribchester to Rochdale.

Keeping all these country districts well in mind, we must try to imagine the progress of archery from its early use in sport by the Saxons to its decadence as a weapon of war in the days of Elizabeth. Our forefathers believed—and they were right—that they owed their national existence to their skill as military bowmen. That skill was not acquired in a voluntary, free-and-easy way ; it was the result of constant practice, regulated and enforced by law. Henry II. was the first king who encouraged archery by proclamation, but at an earlier date, in the reign of Henry I., a bowman was not punished if he by accident killed some one with an arrow. All this, however, was but a rude beginning, and it was not till after the Great Statute of Winchester had been carried into execution by Edward I. and his advisers that the art of shooting with the big war-bow became at once the drill and the recreation of the English

OLD ENGLAND

people. Thenceforward, to the times of Elizabeth, every able-bodied layman had to begin his military training at the age of fifteen, and a soldier he remained till the age of sixty. Riches qualified him for service on horseback, armed *cap-à-pie*, while a small income kept him an archer all his life. "In forty shillings land," says the statute, "a sword, a bow and arrows, and a dagger ; and all others that may shall have bows and arrows."

As time went on, and the bow came to be looked upon as the emblem of England's freedom and greatness, shooting butts were ordered to be set up in every hamlet, and on Sundays and holidays (12 Rich. II. cap. 6 ; 11 Hen. IV. cap. 4) all able-bodied men were required to attend in the field, "as valyant Englishmen ought to do," "utterly leaving the play at bowls, quoits, kails, and other unthrifty games," magistrates, mayors, and bailiffs being responsible for the working of these Acts, under penalty of a fine of twenty shillings for each time these officers neglected their duty. It is clear from this that archery was a form of national conscription, and that all popular games likely to interfere with it were sternly discouraged.

The legislature, which thus enforced the practice of archery by various statutes, had also to defend the poor from the bowyers and fletchers, the makers of bows and arrows, who attempted to form a monopoly. A great many archers in the country made their own archery tackle, but a great many others had to pay market prices, and they could not afford to give a rose noble (6s. 8d.) for a foreign

PLATE LXIII
ON THE URE, AYSGARTH, YORKSHIRE



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ARCHERY TACKLE

yew bow, half that sum for one of inferior description, and 2s. for a bow of common English woods. Two shillings was the equivalent of twelve times that sum in our money. Imagine, then, the anxiety with which yeomen and laymen followed the market prices for archery tackle. Thus in 1341 white bows 6 ft. 4 in. long cost 12*d.*, and painted bows 6*d.* more, probably because the wood was yew, not basil, wych elm, ash, or hazel. In 1470, at Canterbury, "five sheaf of arrows and twelve bows" were sold for 12s. 4*d.* The London price ten years later was 20s. for ten bows and 34s. 8*d.* for twelve sheaves of arrows, the red leather arrow cases fetching 9*d.* and the belts 2*d.* each. Prices were fixed by statute in 1482; long-bows of yew were not to cost more than 3s. 4*d.*, and this remained the average price for many years, though long-bows of inferior woods, quite good enough for lads and young men, were bought at 8*d.* or 1s. In this matter we touch the fundamental weakness of mediæval archery. The people were willing enough to serve their country, but even the lowest prices of archery tackle were higher than many could afford to pay without much self-sacrifice, and this made the statutes inoperative whenever the stimulus of war was absent for a few years. Archers were well paid on foreign service, and men were eager to have the chance of winning money by means of loot and ransoms, so these attractions enabled our military kings to choose their bowmen from among the most daring spirits in the rural districts. An

OLD ENGLAND

archer's pay was considerably higher than that of Tommy Atkins. It was *2d.* a day in 1281, *3d.* in 1346, and *6d.* in the reign of Henry VIII. Mounted archers received *6d.* in 1421, and *8d.* in the next century. Multiply these sums by twelve, and you will get their tempting value at the present time.

In brief, the State did everything that was possible to make archery popular, despite the costliness of tackle. The best wood for bows came from sunny countries, and a great trade in Spanish and Italian yew was carefully fostered. The most wilful difficulty that Parliament had to contend against, year after year, was the commercial dishonesty of bowyers and fletchers, and of traders in yew timber. These men had to import a given number of rough bowstaves with every ton of merchandise, and with every barrel of Malmsey and Tyre wine. To raise the price of good yew was their highest aim in life, and when they were thwarted in this they attempted to make use of bad materials, unseasoned woods, and brittle arrow-heads. Their bows would have snapped in pieces, just as our bayonets "corkscrewed" in the Soudan; while the shafts would never have pierced such armour as that which Douglas and his knights found useless at Hambleton Hill in 1402. The State got tired of its war against trickery, and at last Henry IV. decreed that all arrow-heads were to be well tempered, tipped with the best steel, and stamped with the maker's name; all that were not manufactured in this way would be forfeited, and their artificer fined and imprisoned.

TRADE DISHONESTY

I should like to say a great deal more about the archery statutes, because they illustrate very clearly the patriotism of the lower classes and the dogged roguery of traders. As soon as a craft becomes a daily need which the poor cannot do without, the law seems powerless in its efforts to ensure honesty. This, in any case, applies to the bowyers and fletchers of the Middle Ages, though continued endeavours were made to keep them straight. Unless they were freemen of the City of London they could be sent by Government to the most distant villages, to ply their craft there for a time, and so arm the peasantry with regulation bows and arrows. This put them under discipline ; and yet they managed always to wriggle their way into sharp practice, for their trickeries were hated by each succeeding generation. We find, too, that the decline and fall of archery in war was brought about by three causes :

1. The difficulty of enforcing statutes when bows and arrows became too expensive or too carelessly made.
2. The scarcity of good yew timber in England.
3. Foreign yew, even when bowyers obeyed the law, was sold at a price which little farmers and yeomen found too high.

Hollingshed, writing in the time of Shakespeare, complained that the strength of English archers had so much declined that French soldiers turned their backs, at long ranges, " bidding them shoot," " whereas," remarked Hollingshed, " had the archers

OLD ENGLAND

been what they were wont to be, these fellows would have had their breeches nailed to their buttocks."

Henry VIII., himself an excellent archer, opposed these downward tendencies, and tried "to brace again the slackened sinews of the nation." But the rest of his policy made his efforts in this respect a half-failure. In 1511, when he had been king only two years, he saw the Statute of Winchester re-enacted, with new provisions; and the words employed in this Act are worth quoting. "The King's highness calls to his gracious remembrance that by the feats and exercise of the subjects of his realm in shooting in long-bows, there had continually grown and been within the same great numbers and multitudes of good archers, which hath not only defended the realm and the subjects thereof against the cruel malice and dangers of their enemies in times heretofore passed, but also, with little numbers and puissance in regard to their opposites, have done many notable acts and discomfitures of war against the infidels and others; and furthermore reduced divers regions and countries to their due obeysance, to the great honour, fame, and surety of this realm and subjects, and to the terrible dread and fear of all strange nations, anything to attempt or do to the hurt or damage of them. Yet nevertheless, archery and shooting in long-bows are but little used, but daily do diminish and decay, and abate more and more; for that much part of the commonalty and poor people of this realm, whereby of old time the great number and substance of

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PLATE LXIV
VIEW OF CARLISLE, CUMBERLAND





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AN ARCHERY STATUTE

archers had grown and multiplied, be not of power nor ability to buy them long-bows of ewe to exercise shooting in the same, and to sustain the continued charge thereof; and also because, by means and occasions of customable usage of tennis play, bowles, claish, and other unlawful games, prohibited by many good and beneficent statutes, much impoverishment hath ensued: Wherefore, the King's highness, of his great wisdom and providence, and also for zeal to the public weal, surety, and defence of this realm, and the antient fame in this behalf to be revived, by the assent of his lords spiritual and temporal, and his commons, in this present Parliament assembled, hath enacted and established that the Statute of Winchester for archers be put to due execution; and over that, that every man being the King's subject, not lame, decrepit, or maimed, being within the age of sixty years, except spiritual men, justices of the one Bench and of the other, justices of the assize, and Barons of the Exchequer, do use and exercise shooting in long-bows, and also do have a bow and arrows ready continually in his house, to use himself in shooting. And that every man having a man child, or men children in his house, shall provide for all such, being of the age of seven years and above, a bow and two shafts, to learn them and bring them up to shooting; and after such young men shall come to the age of seventeen years, every of them shall provide and have a bow and four arrows continually for himself, at his proper costs and charges, or else of the gift and provision of his

OLD ENGLAND

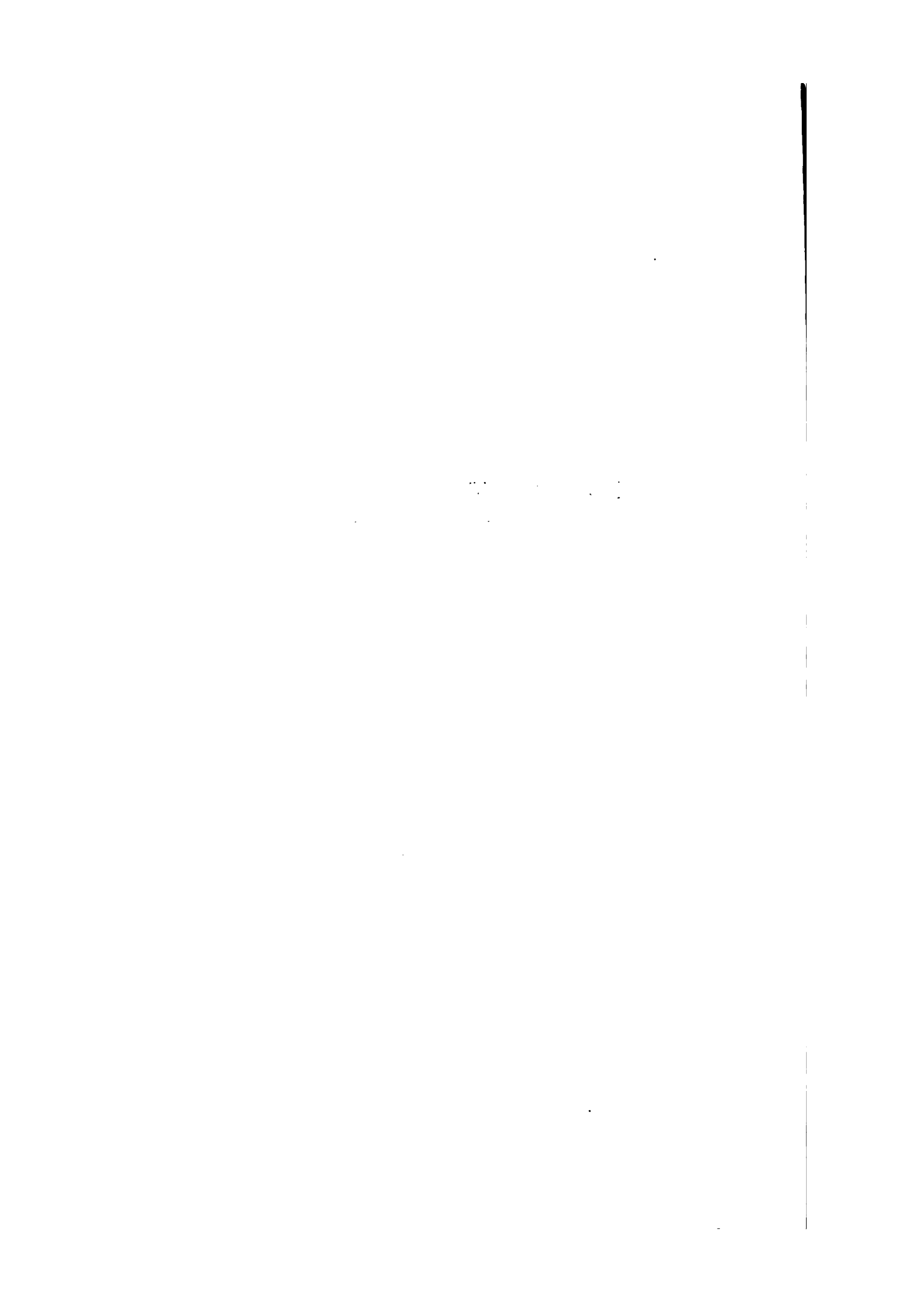
a hundred yards away. Lord Burghley seems to have been influenced by Sir H. Cock, who in 1595 stated to him in writing that the bow, for want of use and practice, had become unserviceable.

Some Elizabethans were heartily glad that the old war bow had been abandoned. They looked abroad for their ideals of practical knowledge in military matters, forgetting that the popularity of firearms on the Continent arose from the fact that these weapons brought the strong and the weak to a level, an advantage which no military critic could ignore in countries where the physique of the lower classes was not fostered by vigorous exercises in the open air. But the enemies of archery did not have it all their own way. They were represented, with much energy, by Humfrey Barwick, Sir Roger Williams, and Matthew Sutcliffe, while the defenders of the old national weapon owed much to the enthusiasm of Sir John Smythe, Sir John Hayward, and Richard Carew. At a much later date, in 1776, Benjamin Franklin, writing to General Lee, expressed a strong wish that bows and arrows might be used again. "These were good weapons not wisely laid aside," he said, and supported his statement with excellent reasons. It is probable that Franklin had read the "Pallas Armata," published by Sir James Turner in 1670, where the value of the bow in war is summed up in the following passage:

"The bow is now in Europe useless, and why I cannot tell, since it is certain enough arrows would do more mischief than formerly they did: since

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PLATE LXV
VIEW OF WOODHOUSE, LEICESTERSHIRE





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BOWS AND FIREARMS

neither men nor horses are so well armed now to resist them, as in former ages they used to be. There are some who bring reasons for bringing the bow again into use, such as these :—First, arrows exceedingly gall horses and consequently disorder their squadrons, because being so hurt they will not be managed by their riders ; secondly, a bowman can shoot many more arrows than a musketeer bullets ; thirdly, all the ranks of archers may shoot their arrows over their leaders' heads with equal mischief to an enemy, whereas musketeers can conveniently but deliver their shot by one rank after another, or by three ranks at most, by kneeling, stooping, and standing—seldom practised and only at dead lift. These reasons are to me unanswerable, and I think might weigh much with princes to make the half, or at least a third, of their *velites* to be archers, and by the bargain they might save much money expended in powder and lead.”

If this sound advice had been followed the long-bow would have been useful in battle to the time of the Crimean War. When one reads of the way in which the French cavalry rode up to the British squares at Waterloo, it is interesting to recall the disorder that a flight of arrows never failed to cause among mounted men-at-arms in the old times. Horses, when the heavy barbed shafts struck them, went mad with pain, turned rapidly to right or left, plunged against one another, and put a whole squadron into a state of panic. The French would not have charged twice at Waterloo had there been a hundred good archers inside each

OLD ENGLAND

British square. Whilst the men in front were getting their muzzle-loaders ready for firing an archer could have let loose six arrows, and as the French horses were quite unarmed, unlike those of mediæval days, the arrows would have gone home with terrific ease and effect.

Yet there are two sides to all questions. It was a mistake, no doubt, from a military standpoint, to abandon the long-bow in war; but from a humane point of view it was praiseworthy, for the world has never seen a more inhuman weapon. Even the slightest wounds by arrows were dangerous, because there was a thick coating of rust and microbes on the barbed heads, that acted as a poison, causing gangrene and other hideous troubles. When muscles were lacerated and bones fractured the rust gave poignant agony. The treatment of such wounds may be studied in Ambroyse Paré, surgeon to Francis I. of France. The part afflicted must be deeply scarified without loss of time, then vigorously sucked by some one who holds in his mouth a small quantity of sweet oil, to attract and dilute the venom.

Then, again, consider the death-rate in the battles won by our English archers. It was very much higher than in modern wars. Some writers, it is true, denounce the Franco-German War as the most murderous on record. Yet during the whole course of that seven months' campaign the Germans lost hardly 5 per cent. of their men, who numbered about one million. Only 28,000 were killed on the many stricken fields, as may be gathered from Dr.

SLAUGHTER IN WAR

Engel's statistical work. How small this loss seems as compared with that at Crécy, at Agincourt, and at Flodden Field! Even the French admit that our archers slew 11,000 men at Agincourt, and more than twice that number at Crécy. As to our modern rifles, they are far more terrifying to the imagination than they are destructive on the field of battle. The Boers, for instance, are among the best shots in the world; yet Dr. Jameson suffered but little from their incessant rain of bullets. After about thirty-six hours' fighting about thirty-six men were put *hors de combat*. At Flodden Field, in a little more than sixty minutes, from eight to ten thousand brave Scots fell to the English arrows. It is one thing to kill with a shaft a man whom you can see, and it is quite another thing to find your mark at a thousand yards, in these days of smokeless powder.

And then, greater courage was needed in the old days. The flight of the arrows could be watched: a man knew that his hour had come before the shaft struck him. It is one of Napoleon's sayings that there is nothing like the roar of cannon to give men heart to fight for their country. There was no such encouragement for archers and their victims. Millions of snakes seemed to be hissing through the air; that was all; and no enemy of England was in love with that music. The hiss of English arrows was feared by all European troops:

“ Keen and low
Doth the arrow sing
The Song of the Bow,
The sound of the string,

OLD ENGLAND

The shafts cry shrill ;
Let us forth again,
Let us feed our fill
On the flesh of men."

It must not be thought that the old archery worked well for no other purpose than the support of warlike kings and their ambitions. Its influence upon social England was very important. By the archery statutes the poor were made into a formidable democracy ; and those great victories over the mailed French aristocracy which revolutionised the whole art of war gave the English people a hearty personal interest in the fortunes of the national life, and a just appreciation of their own worth and power. These yeomen, peasants, and artizans could not be oppressed by bad kings or by unscrupulous nobles. Their training and their victories had taught them how to win and how to keep their just rights and privileges. If they, like the poor in France, had been wretched and debased, without nerve in danger, without patience and fortitude in times of stress on the battlefield, then no prince would have honoured them by fighting with them on foot, as Henry V. did at Agincourt ; and certainly the wealthy classes would have scorned to make known their grievances in Parliament. Our constitutional history became free and powerful only because the children of the soil were trained soldiers who could vie on equal terms with the nobility.

To this truth Charles VII. of France was keenly alive, and that is why he imitated our laws for the encouragement of archery. His aim was to trans-

PLATE LXVI

THE ELM TREE INN ON THE TRENT,
NOTTINGHAM



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THE FRENCH PEASANT

form his peasants and artizans into a disciplined power that the nobles would fear and respect. It would have been a blessing to France if this long-sighted policy had been carried out to its last consequences; but the nobles had the ear of Charles VII.'s unwise successors, and the people, deprived of their bows, were flung back into their former state of helpless misery and discontent. Only the Greater Jacquerie of 1793 can relieve the French peasant. The chasm between him and the privileged classes would grow wider and deeper, till at last his story would be the saddest in all European history. Do you remember La Bruyère's description of the French peasants? It runs thus:

“Certain wild animals may be seen scattered over the country, males and females, black, livid, and burnt up by the sun, bound to the earth, in which they poke and fumble with invincible obstinacy: they have a kind of articulate speech, and when they rise upon their feet they show a human countenance, and indeed are men.”

Jean François Millet, who inherited all the accumulated tragedy of the French peasant's life through the centuries, writes with a greater tenderness than La Bruyère, but with the same gloom and pathos. He sees not only the horses in the plain, smoking as they plough, but over there, “in some rocky spot, a man entirely spent, whose panting gasps have sounded since morning, and who tries to stand upright a little to get breath.” How different all this undoubtedly is from the English peasant's life during the Middle Ages! There was a dark

OLD ENGLAND

side to it, as we know ; but, on the other hand, it had many good points, a coarse plenty, a rough cheerfulness, a steady growth of freedom, and a general look of physical well-being that foreigners noticed always with surprise and admiration. "What comyn folke in all this world," said a State Paper in 1515, "may compare with the comyns of England in riches, freedom, liberty, welfare, and all prosperity?" Yes, that was indeed the question ; and we may be sure that the national discipline of archery contributed much to the support of a high-hearted race, eager in body and stern in temper.

None can read Chaucer without feeling the gallant cheeriness that runs through his poetry like a Thames of sunlight. The atmosphere is full of health, like Chaucer's yeoman, who, no doubt, represents the typical archer of the fourteenth century :

And he was cladde in cote and hode of grene,
A shefe of peacock arwes bryght and kene
Under his belt he bare ful thriftily ;
Well coude he dresse his takel yemanly ;
His arwes drouped not with fetheres lowe,
And in his hond he bare a mighty bowe.

How tall was this weapon, and what was its strength? To answer this question we must turn to the few historic bows which time has spared us. Two of these relics are in the Tower of London, and their history is curious. In 1545 they belonged to a couple of those seven hundred brave fellows who lost their lives when the *Mary Rose* heeled over and sank under the eyes of Henry VIII. at Spithead. Nearly three hundred years later, in

OLD ENGLISH BOWS

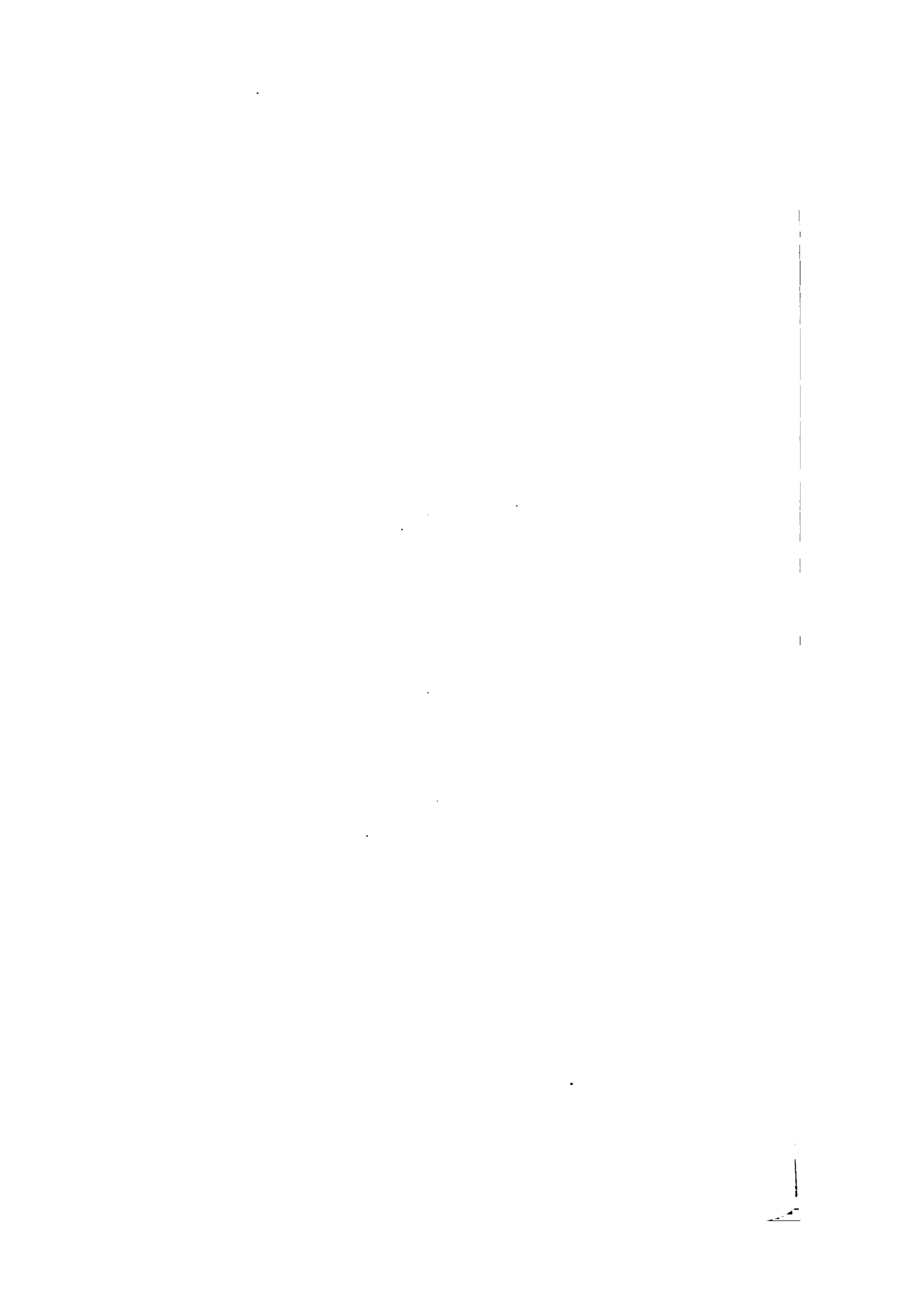
1841, these bows were recovered. The more perfect one of the two is nearly six feet five inches long, and its girth grows from being three and a quarter inches at a distance of one foot from either end to four and a half inches at about two feet ten inches from each end. It is a rough, unfinished stave rather than a bow ready for use. Perhaps the strength of its pull may be estimated to be about eighty-five pounds, like that of the famous Flodden Bow, belonging to the Royal Company of Archers in Scotland. Do you not marvel at the physical power of the men who could draw such formidable weapons at Agincourt, after many days and nights of sickness and hunger, after much tramping and hardship in the chill October rain and wind? Even the tired muscles of our English peasants were then as dangerous as gunpowder was to become!

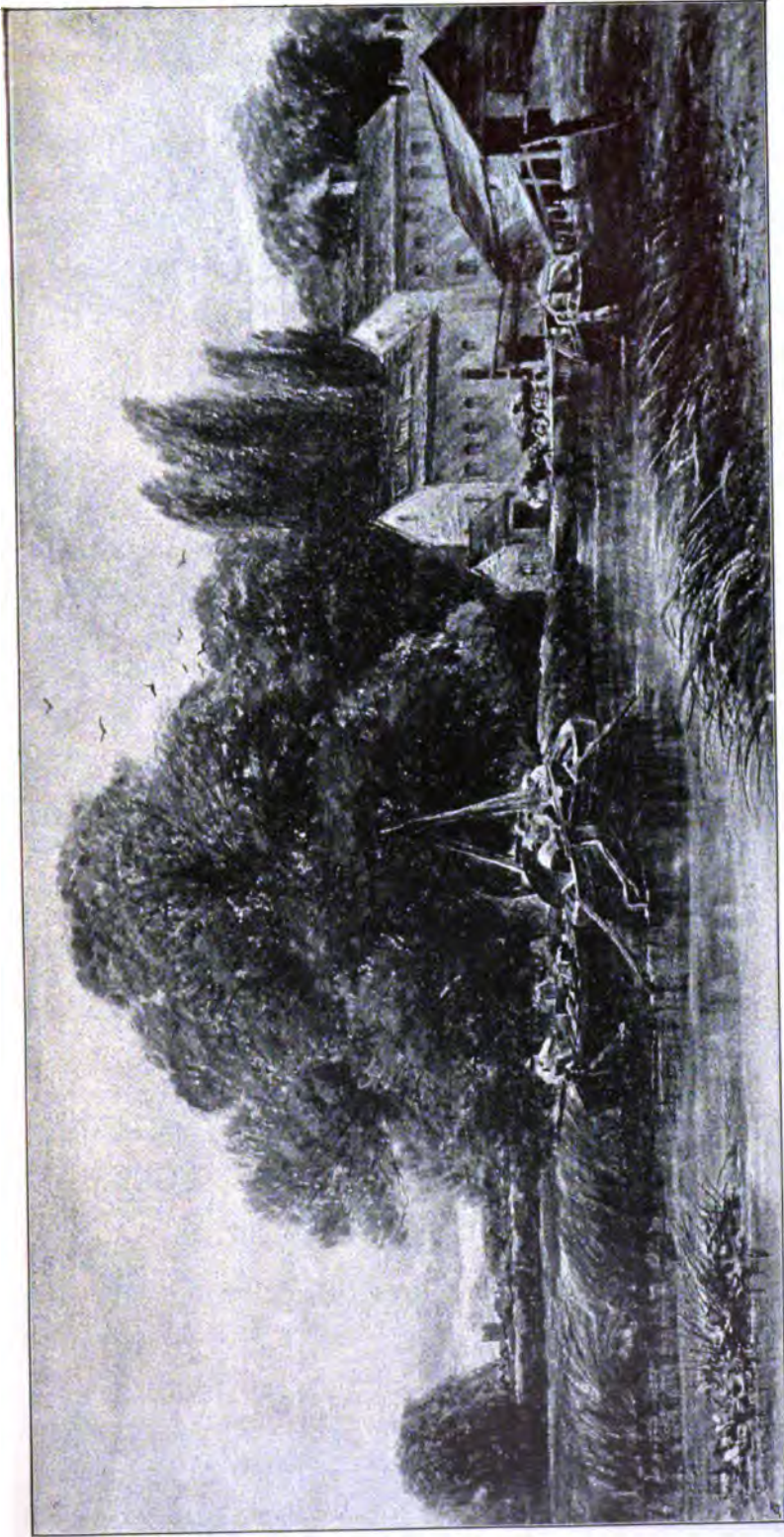
The length of the English war arrow has given rise to many disputes. Modern archers do not like to believe that their forefathers used arrows a yard long. They put aside all evidence, and laugh to scorn the Robin Hood ballads. One ballad says that Robin and his men had a hundred bows furnished with strings, a hundred sheaves of good arrows, with steel heads, every arrow an ell long, adorned with peacock's feathers, and bound at the notching with white silk. There is no reason why a poet should invite ridicule by giving a wrong description of a popular weapon. He is not in the least likely to say that a modern bayonet is four feet long. Similarly the balladists would not have spoken about arrows a yard long had none existed.

OLD ENGLAND

Besides, the poets are supported by other writers, like Roger Ascham and Clement Edmonds. A detailed description is to be found also in Paulus Jovius, a noted Italian author, who "flourished" between the years 1485 and 1552, and who anticipated us by writing with metal pens. "The English," says he, "shoot arrows, somewhat thicker than a man's little finger, two cubits (thirty-six inches) long, and headed with barbed steel points, from wooden bows of extraordinary size and strength." I cite these only as instances by the way, and nothing could be easier than to quote to the same effect from many other old authorities. "To give you some taste of the skill of the Cornish archers' sufficiency," says Carew, "for long shooting, their shafte was a cloth yard; their pricks twenty-four score: for strength, they could pierce any ordinary armour." At Cotehele in the year 1825 Mr. Kempe, an authority on the present subject, saw some arrows which he believed to be old English, three feet two inches in length; "the heads were not barbed, they were solid pyramidal pieces of steel; the shafts, made of beech or some light wood, had no feathers, and the nocks were not guarded with horn." Finally, Edward III. in the ninth year of his reign ordered the mayor and sheriffs of a county "to purvey three hundred good and sufficient bows, with strings proportionable to them; and also four chests of arrows of the length of one ell, made of good well-seasoned wood; the heads of the said arrows to be duly sharpened, and the flukes or barbs of a large size."

PLATE LXVII
ZOUCH MILL, LEICESTERSHIRE





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ASCHAM ON ARCHERY

A yard, therefore, was the standard length of the English battle arrow. But we learn from an Act passed by Edward IV. that a little man might reduce the length to three-quarters of the standard. The king's agents, let me repeat, had the pick of the strongest archer in each hamlet, a man like Chaucer's miller, "ful big of braun, and eek of boones," though not necessarily with "a werte upon the cop right of his nose."

My subject has a very interesting social side. The shooting grounds in rural places must have been picturesque. All sorts and conditions of men were there, from the labourer to the jolly forester in green, and from the strapping ploughman, in his coarse tunic of homespun, to the young squire of the parish. Paul Hentzner (1558-1623) describes how our English husbandmen went to their daily work with their bows and arrows, which they put sometimes on their ploughs, and sometimes in a corner of the field under cultivation. Again, Roger Ascham gives a lively picture in which we may see all the antics of the raw recruits on the village shooting grounds. "In drawing," says he, "some fetch such a compasse as though they woulde turne rounde and bless all the feelde"; "another makes such a wrestling with his gear, as though he were able to shoote no more as long as he lyved"; "another maketh a wrynching with his back, as though a man pynched him behynde"; "some shooteth his head forward, as though he would byte the mark; an other wynketh with one eye, and loketh with the other"; and some "wyll gyve

CHAPTER VIII

THE ROMANCE OF THE "GRENE WODE"

AFTER perhaps eleven centuries of toil, begun by the makers of the Roman roads, and continued by English swineherds, woodmen, and drovers, the great Midland forests were transformed into some of the most beautiful country in the world, where good Dame Nature, submitting gladly to defeat, kept nightingales to sing for her above the lusty cornfields and the pleasant manor-villages. One forest, Arden, dwindled so much that people seldom thought about its early history, during those long periods when it covered the greater part of that land which became the kingdom of Mercia. The Fosse-Way, the Watling Street, with other roads of less importance, slashed this forest into districts; then camps grew into towns, order emerging from chaos; and at last, between the thirteenth century and the sixteenth, the historic Arden of old time would have been forgotten altogether, had it not left in the people's minds a scaring delight in wild and terrible superstitions.

Even at the present time in out-of-the-way villages in Warwickshire a belief that witches do

PLATE LXVIII
GEORGIAN WATER-MILL AT BARFORD,
WARWICKSHIRE





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SUPERSTITION

exist may be met with ; and during the past thirty-three years it has led to tragedies. In 1875 a waggoner named Haywood, living at Little Compton, in South Warwickshire, killed with his pitchfork a poor old woman named Ann Tennant, who sold mops for a living. " Hur were the properest witch ever knowed," said he, by way of explanation, and then went on to affirm that he " knowed " sixteen more in the parish " as oughter be saarved the same." Other yokels supported Haywood in his cocksureness.

This story is true, incredible as it seems to a town-dweller. Somehow, anyhow, forests outlive their trees and swamps : their spirit remains in the peasant mind ; and it is a spirit of superstition, pagan and tenacious. This does not mean that forests are the only parents and nurses of folklore cruelties ; but there can be no doubt that they do breed and foster a belief in malignant beings as enduring as the bodily ills from which mankind suffers.

Shakespeare noticed this, and reflected it here and there in his work, as in the witches of *Macbeth* ; and we should laugh at these weird sisters if some inherited feeling did not force us to accept them as dramatic possibilities. We have not yet outgrown every vestige of that old habit of mind which caused the Presbytery of the Secession Church in Edinburgh to publish in 1743 a protest against the repeal of all statutes affecting witchcraft, because " the express laws of God " had been violated by the Act of repeal, and for this " a holy God may be provoked in a way

OLD ENGLAND

of righteous judgment." For a superstition as strong as this Shakespeare wrote the witch scenes in *Macbeth*; but did he imagine that audiences would accept them in theatres three hundred years later?

In *King Lear*, also, we see the popular idea of a witch pass through the needs of a tragic plot into Goneril and Regan, princess witches; while elsewhere, in the complex personality of the man-monster Caliban, Shakespeare makes use of the vague notions that lingered in Arden concerning those Celts who fled from the Angles and Saxons into the forests, and lived there like wild animals, their natures and persons becoming as savage as their hunted and haunted existence. These are the most sinister types of character that Shakespeare picked up in youth from the folklore gossip of Warwickshire peasants, perhaps as he rode from farm to farm on his father's business, collecting fleece for the wool-stapler. How remarkable it is that we should find in this poet's life, little as we know about it, everything needful to make his genius quintessentially English! He was born not only in the heart of England, but near to the remnants of a great forest, his mother a lady by birth and upbringing, his father a yeoman; his native town had a good school and a clever master, Thomas Hunt; the puritans among the burgesses of Stratford were not strong enough to keep John Shakespeare from entertaining play-actors in the Gild-Hall underneath the schoolroom, when his son was five years old; in the neighbourhood all English sports and pas-

IDEALISM

times and industries were famous, and with the greatest industry of all, sheep-farming, the father was connected as a wool-stapler, and this must have brought his lad early and closely in touch with peasants and their homes. The very name of Shakespeare's mother was an inspiration: Mary Arden—Mary of the Forest, for Arden means "the forest." Then, side by side with this, and blending with it, was the influence of that great romance of the greenwood which took shape between the fourteenth century and the seventeenth, a romance having no more resemblance to the real forest of history than a love-poem has to the girl who inspired it.

How this ideal of the "grene wode" grew up in the popular mind, taking ever a stronger hold on the people's imagination, is a problem as interesting as the difference (let us say) between Swift's Stella and the same lady when transfigured by Thackeray's enthusiasm. Stella was a minx; yet Thackeray dreams of her as a pure and affectionate heart, a fair and tender creature, whom all the world now loves. This ideal he nurses and dangles; nothing is too good for it: Stella must have had countless champions, millions of manly hearts mourning for her. "From generation to generation we take up the fond tradition of your beauty; we watch and follow your tragedy, your bright morning love and purity, your constancy, your grief, your sweet martyrdom. We know your legend by heart. You are one of the saints"—of the English genius in romance, like Maid Marian, like Robin Hood, like

OLD ENGLAND

the Nut-brown Maid, and like other characters in the ideal greenwood.

It is far from easy to explain this idealising trait of the English genius, though it runs through so much that is noble and immortal in all English arts and tastes and prejudices. The English genius plays in a world where dreams are common furniture. An idealist by instinct, it accepts realism only as an occasional ally, not as a friend and companion. Necessity in subject-matter compels it at times to tell ugly truths, but there's no affection for this need of art ; touch it with pity, with gratitude, with love, with admiration, and it rises into idealism at once, like a lark into the dawn or towards the midday sun. Peasants in the mediæval times believed that Robin Hood had fought for their rights ; hence their gratitude, and their ballad songs, and the yearly festival which they held in memory of him during the month of May. The romance of the "grene wode" is the English genius stirred by gratitude and the spirit of adventure ; and it may be taken as a safe and certain model by any writer who wants to find his way into the hearts of the English people.

Ardent literary societies may study Carlyle and Browning, cracking the nutty difficulties one by one, as though literary style were a new form of Euclid ; but English readers don't like to break hard nuts—it sets their teeth on edge, whether the kernel be sweet or bitter. What they love is that blend of suggested realism with fantasy and bright, gay action which for so many centuries has

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filled the Robin Hood ballads with enchantment. Shakespeare put the same blend in many of his plays, above all in *As you Like It* and the *Midsummer Night's Dream*; and Scott did so too, but wrote with so much ease and rapidity as to tire his present-day readers by putting them out of breath. Yet his version of the greenwood adventurers has all the magic of the ballads. It is sometimes forgotten that Alexander Dumas, in two volumes on Robin Hood, caught the spirit of the romantic "grene wode," imitating with keen pleasure the sentimental English touch in matters of love and stirring action. He lived for a time in Zenda, the modern capital of Greenwood Land, as Arden and Sherwood are the ancient capitals.

This description of the English genius will not be accepted as true, for Englishmen like to think of themselves as unimaginative, prosaic, eminently rational and hard-headed; and sometimes they do learn to be all that, just as Webb taught himself to swim across the Channel into France. We English are not men of business by native inclination, like the Scotch, who succeed wherever they go, unswervingly discreet, patient, steady, close, and saving—practical through and through, and therefore unconscious of their instinctive power. The nearer we get to Scotland the more businesslike Englishmen become; but Yorkshire is a dreamland of trade if you compare its mind with that of Aberdeen. England's future in trade rests partly with her northern counties, and partly with the Scots who colonise her commercial towns. Her

OLD ENGLAND

own genius, considered as a whole, is an adventurer, a gambler in chances, romantic, idealistic, fond of sentiment, slow to understand hard facts, impatient with details, eager to escape from the workhouse of actual life into a world where fantasy is king. Even a cottage built by the old English genius has a ballad-like charm; and no rustic gardens in the world can vie with England's.

Even the British Empire belongs to the romance of the "grene wode," is an ideal much more than a fact—an ideal full of sentiment, not a mechanism founded on a reasoned system; and that is why it is likely to endure as long as the genius that won it at haphazard, moved by adventure, by a yearning to get away from the routine of Western order and repose. The essence and the life of English colonisation have been a certain vagabondism that will work under conditions chosen by itself, in the midst of dangers, excitements, and new scenes. This pioneer spirit is, of course, the antithesis of town-bred ideals; and the Empire is more likely to receive its death-blow in England than in any other part, because the national temper in England becomes more and more street-ridden, and therefore at variance with things which are not urban.

To hold the Empire together we must keep under discipline the urban habit of mind, with its many contrasts of bad handwork and tired headwork, and of great unearned wealth and wageless despair. It is fretful and makeshift, like the jerry-builder with whom Tennyson protested for cutting down useful trees on a new site. "Put
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GREENWOOD LAND

your house a few yards back, and you could save them," said the poet; "trees are beautiful things." "Trees are luxuries," replied the home-spoiler; "what *we* need is utility." This vandalism would wreck pyramids and turn them into hearthstones, price sixpence a dozen. It is common in all towns, it invades old English villages, it tells us everywhere that "ideals of thoroughness are boſh"; so I give my vote to the romance of the "grene wode," the maker of Shakespeares, the builder of cathedrals, the founder of an empire at haphazard, the English genius unharmed by urban littlenesses.

In Greenwood Land there is another thing worth studying, and that is our English love for animals, which differs from the same sentiment among other nations. Bring any animal within the atmosphere of our home-life, and our tenderness towards it is soon charmed with idealism; we humanise it with our affection, as Shakespeare humanised the horse and Landseer the dog. Foreigners are astonished by this, for they keep animals apart from themselves, looking at them in an impersonal way from a detached point of view as sympathetic observers. They do not identify themselves with the animals they like, nor praise and blame men by comparing them with their beloved four-footed friends.

In Shakespeare there are about three hundred references each to the horse and the dog. The one is idealised, made quasi-human, a type of noble qualities, while the other is represented as a thing to be hated. Shakespeare detests dogs, has nothing good to say about them; they live outside

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his sympathies; to him they have no place in the greenwood of romance. Even the splendid passage in the *Midsummer Night's Dream* is purely dramatic, and shows that the poet's affection is not in the least concerned, whereas he never speaks of a horse without showing the greatest possible sympathy and friendship. He explains also in *Hamlet*, in a speech by the king, what his own feeling for this animal means:

He grew unto his seat,
And to such wondrous doing brought his horse,
As he had been incorpsed and demi-natured
With the brave beast.

Yes, that is it. The dog, on the other hand, is to Shakespeare "inhuman," "unhallowed":

Away inhuman dog, unhallowed.
Go, base intruder, overweening slave.

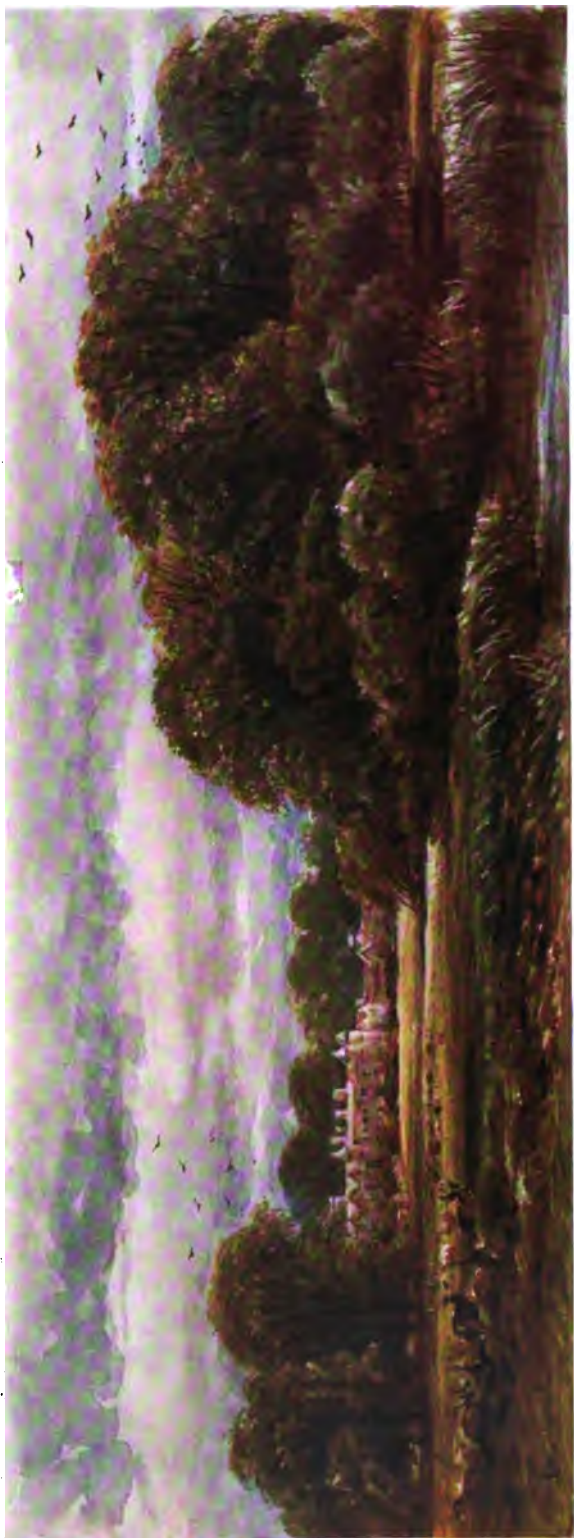
Perhaps the poet was sensitive to the smell of dogs; or perhaps, as a wonderful passage in *Venus and Adonis* suggests, he learned to hate them in boyhood when he watched the coursing matches on the Cotswold Hills. The description of the hunted hare in *Venus and Adonis* throbs and quivers with pity and indignation; yet I have never seen it quoted by humanitarians. When Shakespeare wrote it he was himself "the timorous flying hare," "poor Wat, far off upon a hill":

And now his grief may be comparèd well
To one sore sick that hears the passing-bell.

And the whole picture is made more poignant by the satire underlying its subject. Venus knows

PLATE LXIX
CHARLECOTE, WARWICKSHIRE





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OUTSIDE THE GREENWOOD

that Adonis runs into danger when he hunts the "angry, chasing, sharp-fanged boar," so she asks him to "uncouple at the timorous flying hare, or at the fox, which lives by subtlety, or at the roe, which no encounter dares." These are the "fearful creatures" that Adonis should pursue over the downs. And the sport is so noble too :

And when thou hast on foot the purblind hare,
Mark the poor wretch, to overshoot his troubles,
How he outruns the wind, and with what care
He cranks and crosses, with a thousand doubles :
The many musets through the which he goes
Are like a labyrinth to amaze his foes.

Sometime he runs among a flock of sheep,
To make the cunning hounds mistake their smell,
And sometime where earth-delving conies keep,
To stop the loud pursuers in their yell,
And sometime sorteth with a herd of deer :
Danger deviseth shifts ; wit waits on fear.

* * * * *

By this, poor Wat, far off upon a hill,
Stands on his hinder legs with listening ear,
To hearken if his foes pursue him still :
Anon their loud alarums he doth hear ;
And now his grief may be comparèd well
To one sore sick that hears the passing-bell.

Then shalt thou see the dew-bedabbled wretch
Turn, and return, indenting with the way ;
Each envious briar his weary legs doth scratch,
Each shadow makes him stop, each murmur stay ;
For misery is trodden on by many,
And being low never relieved by any.

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A noble sport indeed, and followed to this day by English gentlemen, because our English feeling towards animals depends on custom and romance. Where there is custom without romance we are unmindful of cruelty. I hunted the hare myself before I read Shakespeare's description of that pastime. Then the poor thing ceased to be a wild animal; it entered the greenwood of romance, it became a thing of poetry. Animals cease to be such when the English genius begins to sympathise with them: and in course of time we shall see the hare idealised out of sport into safety, and many birds will be brought into the aviary of the "grene wode." The shooting of hand-reared pheasants amuses kings to-day, but it will go like cock-fighting and bear-baiting.

The illustrations to this chapter recall two districts in the literary history of the romantic "grene wode." Plate 68, a sylvan picture of Barford Water-mill, belongs to the Warwickshire Arden, "the golden world" as represented in *As You Like It* and in the fairy scenes of the *Midsummer Night's Dream*. You will find in another chapter a view of Hampton Lucy Church, Plate 37, in the heart of Shakespeare's country; while Plate 69 represents Charlecote, the scene of Shakespeare's poaching episode, though some prefer another place in the same neighbourhood, Fulbroke Park, which, unlike Charlecote, did not form part of Sir Thomas Lucy's property. It is quite likely that Shakespeare at both parks put himself at odds with the Eliza-

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SHAKESPEARE'S POACHING

bethan law which punished deer-stealers with three months' imprisonment and the payment of a sum three times the value of the damage. That the poet was fond of sport is proved by his knowledge in matters that concern angling, archery, hawking, hunting, horses, and birds; and when he was young many lads poached because it was a dangerous thing to do. Rowe, writing just ninety-three years after Shakespeare's death, gives the tradition with a smug air of self-complacency, as though he himself had never been wild with mischief in all his arid life. This good man, who seems to have been swaddled in piety, never saw the fun and humour that makes the poaching adventure as welcome as Falstaff and his companions. Shakespeare, says Rowe, "had, by a misfortune common enough to young fellows, fallen into ill company, and, among them, some, that made a frequent practice of deer-stealing, engaged him with them more than once in robbing a park that belonged to Sir Thomas Lucy of Charlecote, near Stratford. For this he was persecuted by that gentleman, as he thought, somewhat too severely; and, in order to revenge that ill-usage, he made a ballad upon him, and though this, probably the first essay of his poetry, be lost, yet it is said to have been so very bitter that it redoubled the persecution against him to that degree that he was obliged to leave his business and family in Warwickshire and shelter himself in London."

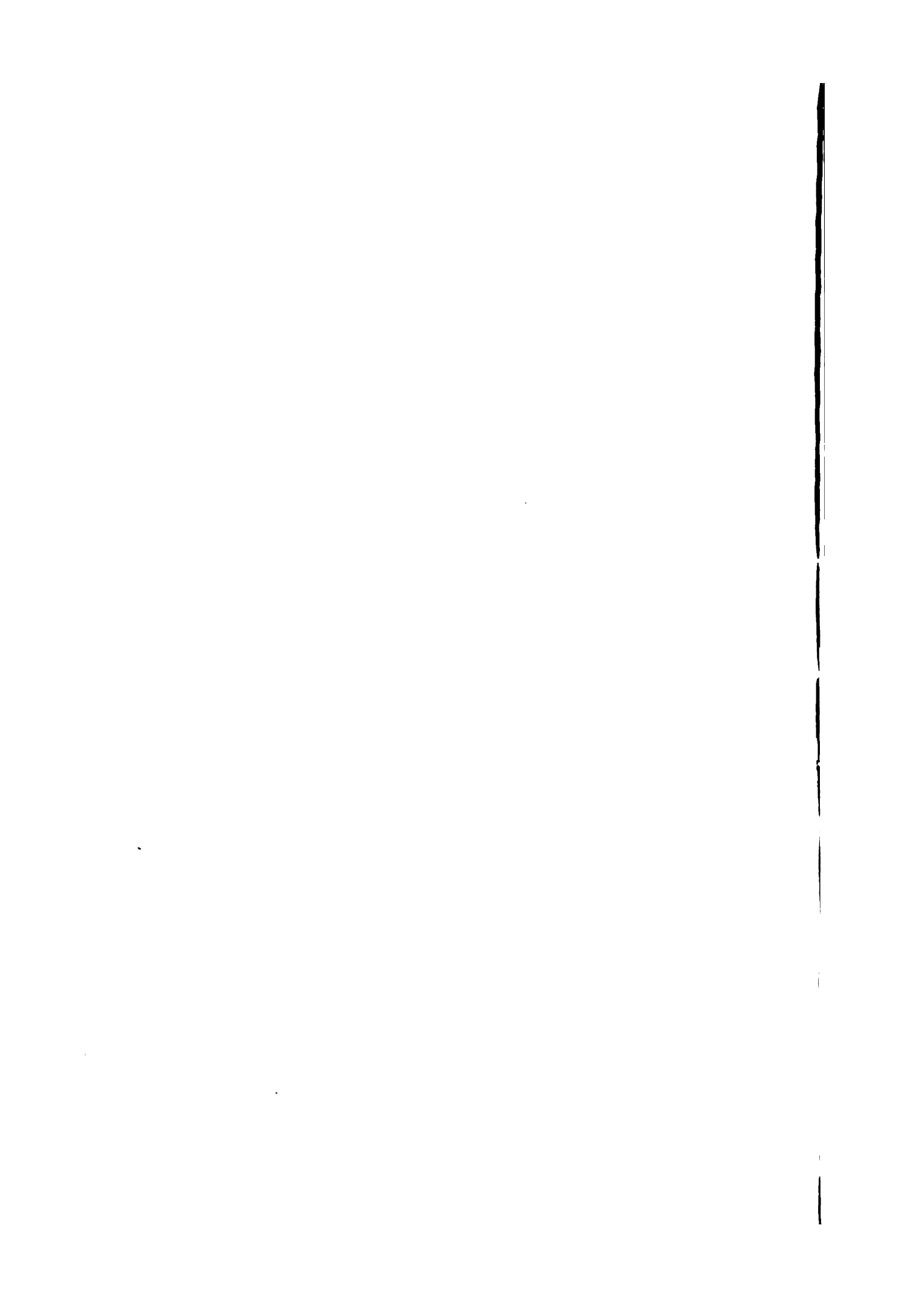
It is a delicious tale. Poor weak Shakespeare is led into mischief by bad young fellows, not having

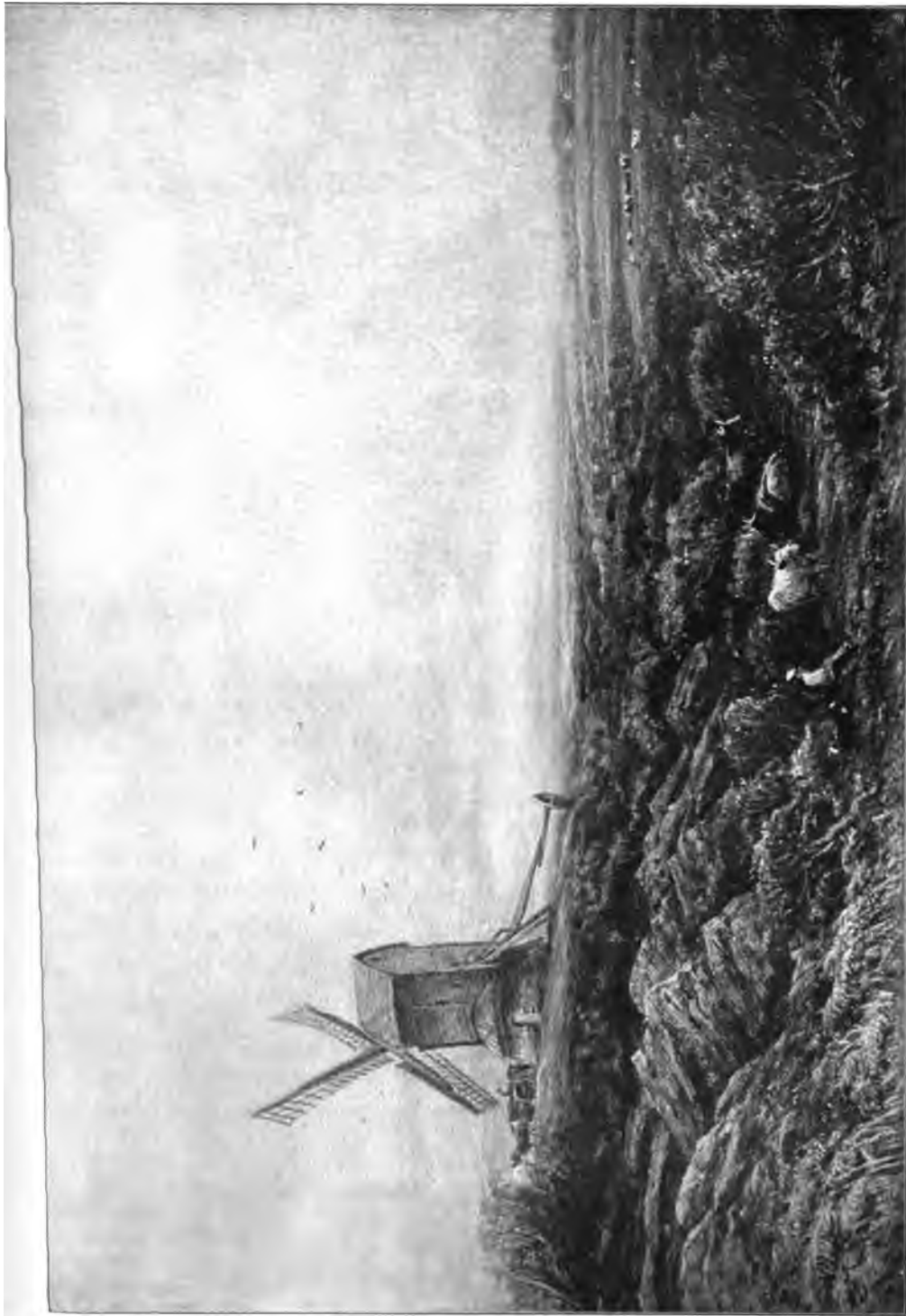
OLD ENGLAND

spirit enough to rule—an absurd notion ; but the ballad seems true, and I hope it was sung by all the jolly peasants of Warwickshire. Archdeacon Davies, who was vicar of Saperton, Gloucestershire, towards the end of the seventeenth century, confirms the tradition by independent testimony, and adds a few details : item, that the poet “was much given to all unluckiness in stealing venison and rabbits, particularly from Sir Thomas Lucy” ; item, that Sir Thomas “had him oft whipt, and sometimes imprisoned” ; and so we may be pretty certain that Charlecote was not the only park where the twilight hours became historical. Game was preserved at Fulbroke Park, and Samuel Ireland, in his “Views on the Warwickshire Avon,” published in 1795, engraved an old farmhouse in the village of Fulbroke where Shakespeare was said to have been shut up after his arrest. However this may be, Shakespeare had some fun, and was whipped and imprisoned ; he fled the county, and in after years took his revenge, turning Lucy into Justice Shallow. Such ridicule must have been galling indeed to the Charlecote family. It was said at the time of the French Revolution that ridicule was a weapon as sharp and fatal as the blade of a guillotine. Shakespeare’s ridicule has a very keen edge ; and as the poaching affair is assigned to 1585, while Justice Shallow did not appear on the stage till 1598, we may see that the poet’s feelings were not soothed by time and success. The whipping tingled in his mind year after year. Surely no other punishment could

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PLATE LXX
WOODHOUSE WINDMILL, LEICESTERSHIRE





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MAID MARIAN

have made him so bitter and pointed in his attack on Lucy.

Shakespeare's love for his native county was as remarkable as the hatred which he kept warm for the manor lord of Charlecote ; and in *As You Like It* we see how he set himself to vie with the Robin Hood ballads and traditions, so that Arden might have its own company of greenwood adventurers, Maid Marian being translated into Rosalind, a new queen of a new romance. Shakespeare, I believe, was influenced all his life by what his mother told him in his boyhood concerning the people's favourite woman, Maid Marian, chaste as Diana, patient as Griselda, and brave as Bradamante. In any case, he loved the Robin Hood stories, and was stimulated by their genial courage and kindness. "Where will the old Duke live?" asks Oliver, in *As You Like It* ; and Charles, wrestler though he is, replies in a vein of poetry :

"They say, he is already in the forest of Arden, and a many merry men with him ; and there they live like the old Robin Hood of England : they say, many young gentlemen flock to him every day, and fleet the time carelessly, as they did in the golden world."

The golden world ! Long may Englishmen visit that home of their good genius, and there taste with delight the anodyne of dreams. To fall in love with Rosalind, to be merry with Puck and Titania, to be archers with Robin Hood and friars with jolly Tuck—what more can a sane reader ask for,

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except a repetition of the pleasure, and a ripe friendship with all the happy dwellers in the romance of the "grene wode"?

Under the greenwood tree
Who loves to lie with me,
And tune his merry note
Unto the sweet bird's throat,
Come hither, come hither, come hither :
Here shall he see
No enemy
But winter and rough weather.

Who doth ambition shun,
And loves to live i' the sun,
Seeking the food he eats,
And pleased with what he gets,
Come hither, come hither, come hither ;
Here shall he see
No enemy
But winter and rough weather.

CHAPTER IX

THE LORD OF THE MANOR

E NGLAND may be likened to her national emblem of the Middle Ages, the yew tree, the longest lived of all trees, the slowest in growth, and the bravest in bad weather. Other nations have undergone sudden and violent changes, turning the movement of their life from one channel into another ; while England, after a great upheaval, after many a national tragedy, has taken up her growth and continued it, just as yew trees do when they have been thrashed by storms and singed by lightning. There are yew trees in England as old as the Norman Conquest, and therefore younger than the English manor, which goes back in direct descent to the Teutonic settlement of the sixth century.

From 1258-59 A.D., the forty-third year of Henry III.'s reign, farm accounts or manor rolls become plentiful in England's social history, and they give a clear and detailed picture of the mediæval manor, with its court of justice, and its farm industries, its people, its communal rights, with the whole intricate network of its government and traditions ; and from that time to the days of

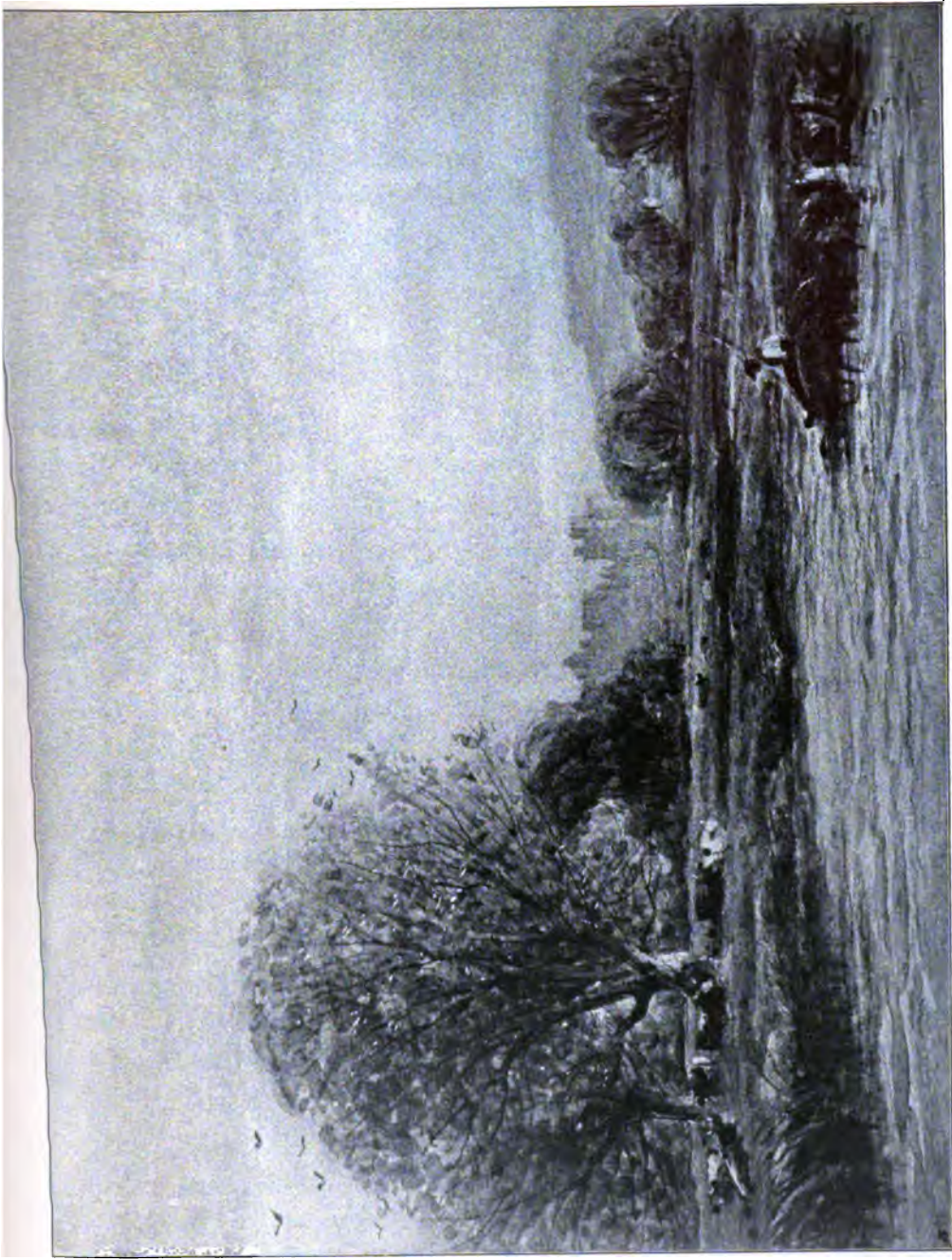
OLD ENGLAND

Henry VIII. the material for a close study of English rustic life remains continuously abundant, and shows that, so far as labourers are concerned, there is little change in rural economy and method, though the serf of the thirteenth century becomes the copyholder of the fourteenth. Growth there is of a slow and steady kind, yew-tree progress, almost imperceptible year by year; followed by those arresting gales which Henry VIII. let loose over the land when he debased the currency, shut up the monasteries and redistributed their estates, and made away with those national agencies of self-help, the guilds, whose revenues he grabbed.

Travelling onward to our own time, we come to at least three other disturbing crises that stayed the growth of English husbandry. The first one is the new feudalism which the people, with Cromwell's help, introduced in their war against Charles I.; the second is the time of danger beginning with the revolt of the American colonies and ending with Napoleon's downfall at Waterloo—a time that drained country districts of men and money; while the third is the guillotine of Free Trade, which has done so much to sever villages and farms from their natural mainstay, the purchasing needs of townspeople. The ideal of a nation's life is that farms should support towns and be themselves supported by towns, without any such competition from outside as the two cannot share with equal and balancing advantages. When foreign competition benefits any one class to the injury of another, a nation is maimed, just as

PLATE LXXI
HADDON HALL





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THE FIELDS

men would be if any system of work crippled their legs while giving unusual vigour to their bodies. Free Trade has benefited towns and starved the land, and to slight kind Mother Earth is to play the fool with Providence. An English farm to-day, viewed in relation to the country's life as a whole, is a mere cypher as compared with a mediæval manor and its value to the State.

It would take a book to give a thorough picture of English rural life; and we should note with particular interest the works written by the late Professor Thorold Rogers, and by Messrs. Ashley, Seeböhm, Cunningham, Kenelm Digby, Russell M. Garnier, Arthur Young, and Augustus Jessopp, to whom we owe an immense debt of gratitude. Such students and teachers are patriots in the widest and best meaning of that word, so the State has never thought about them in connection with Birthday Honours, for they live outside party politics and the needs of party finance.

My aim in this chapter is to give a sketch of the manor system in the thirteenth century; and you will remember that manor life and methods changed very little in essential character between that time and the reign of Henry VIII., so the illustrations by Mr. Orrock denote types of building not isolated from my subject, but intimately connected with it, showing some results of architectural progress in rural districts. There is no break in the lineage of English homes; the earliest and simplest

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founded a dynasty of style which grew and changed with the national ideals of comfort and convenience, linking each succeeding generation with its forerunners. Haddon Hall, Derbyshire, the subject of Plate 71, belongs to the English Renaissance. It is famous for its Elizabethan long gallery, approached by a large and very noble staircase, and extending the whole length of the house, but relieved by projecting bays as convenient as rooms, for they measure 15 ft. by 12 ft., and their stone-mullioned windows give a rich light through the ample leaded panes. This splendid gallery is panelled in oak to the cornice, while the ceiling of modelled plaster is the crown that completes a scheme of work quite royal in its design. Plates 72 and 73 represent other types of Elizabethan houses, Cumberton Manor, near Kidderminster, being the more noteworthy, though the Shropshire manor has much charm and interest. Both drawings are admirable; and note in each, but particularly in Cumberton, that less roof is seen than Ruskin would have wished for.

Houses were unlike these during the thirteenth century, just as Shakespeare's English differed from Robert of Gloucester's, or from that in the Proverbs of Hendyng. Henry III. did not live to see the revival of brickmaking among his people. Stone was cheap, and in some places common, but even then it was used very rarely for domestic buildings; far more often than not it yielded precedence to timber, or wattles daubed with clay or mud. Most country houses were small and frail; hence the injuries done

THE MANOR CHURCH

to them by storms and floods as described by Matthew Paris.

The manor church was usually built of stone, and was big enough for a congregation from five to ten times as large as the one which attended it, the population of a manor ranging from fifty to a hundred persons. We have no social institution older than the parish vestry, and a mediæval rector at his discretion could summon to his church a vestry of all his parishioners; and sometimes he earned a little money for his charities by allowing his church to be a temporary warehouse for wool and grain. Along the coast, where tempests were greatly feared, a church tower was a place of refuge where manor tenants found safety from the tides, and watched from its secure height the destruction of their fragile homes below. I think always of this when reading Matthew Paris, whose history rattles with thunder, flames with forked lightning, and describes in a dramatic manner some of the many annual disasters to cottages and mills. It was thus very necessary that a church should be of stone. At times it served as a castle, a defensive place. "As late as the time of the Parliamentary wars," writes Thorold Rogers, "the Royalists of a Hampshire town garrisoned the parish church, and stood a siege and cannonade in it."

The country parson was, I believe, in most cases a fine-hearted, simple man, brave and sympathetic, good and practical, like his descendants of the present day. There were exceptions, no doubt, as I have shown in Chapter VI.; but into the dark

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shadows that stain religious history I do not care to look at all closely: it is best to accept them as inevitable foils to the half-tones and the lights that shine out in brave, good deeds. Think of the parish priest at his best, working heart and hand in sympathy with his people, going so far at times as to stand at their head when they broke into revolt against wrongs and grievances. This happened in 1326, when the townsmen of Bury looted St. Edmund's Abbey, and did a good deal of burning besides.

No love was lost between the country parsons and the monks. Perhaps they ought to have been like the oil and vinegar that mix together and form a perfect salad; but these clerical extremes never united except in rivalry. Monks were supercilious, and tried to put the country parson aside as a man altogether inferior to themselves, yet so important that he could afford to see his tithes taken and added to the worldly wealth of my Lord Abbot. So the parson was driven back upon the sympathy of his manor folk, and both he and they felt a keen resentment towards the religious orders, till at last this feeling issued into action, and did no end of damage to St. Edmund's Abbey. Country parsons not a few led the attack. At a later date, in the great agrarian outbreak of 1381, the monks of St. Edmund's had another rough lesson, and one victim of John Wrawe's followers was the prior. John Wrawe was the leader in Suffolk, and it is likely that he was influenced by the rural clergy. But, however that may be, we must keep the parish

PLATE LXXII
CUMBERTON MANOR NEAR
KIDDERMINSTER







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PRIEST AND MONKS

priest and the regular orders distinct and apart. There was no sympathy between them, no friendship, no co-operation; and, as Dr. A. Jessopp expressly states, "until a man has got rid of the delusion that monks built parish churches and served them and were working clergy, he will never be able to understand English history." True, Monasteries were endowed institutions occupied with their self-support and with their political standing. Their work in early times was of transcendent value to England, but in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries their religious ardour had burned low; grasping business talents became their stock-in-trade, and the people spoke and thought of them, not as places where prayer and charity went hand in hand together, but as capitalists with secret aims and openly aggressive powers. This conviction spread throughout the country, for wayfarers of many kinds passed continually along the roads, and carried with them from place to place, from one county to another, the local tales and gossip, performing with zest and thoroughness the office of vagabond journalists, peripatetic news-agents.

You will see at a glance the effect which this wayfaring daily history had on village communities. Peasants in the north and south learnt that they had common aims produced by common grievances; country parsons reminded one another at a distance that they were snubbed by priors and abbots, who did not hesitate even to wrong them, as by taking their tithes. And when the friars came to England

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in the thirteenth century, the Dominicans in 1221, the Franciscans in 1224, matters steadily grew worse for the parish priests. For the mendicant friars were not content to live among the poor in towns; they invaded the country also, interfering with a form of life which differed altogether from the social order, or disorder, in towns, and concerning which they had had no experience at all. The miseries to be found in English towns were similar to those which the Franciscans and Dominicans had relieved on the Continent, but with the manorial system of English country life they were not in the least acquainted, and thus their influence became a very serious hindrance to the hard-worked rural priest. There was cause for quarrel here; and it did not grow less when the friars fell away from their enthusiasm and became rich and ambitious, quite forgetting the stern commands in the rule of St. Francis.

Altogether, country parsons were thwarted in many ways, but most of them lived bravely and worked well in their parishes; and it is pleasant to think of them as the bees of Christianity, who sweetened the hardships of those who lived on the land and by the land. If these clergy were the bees of the Christian faith, monks during the thirteenth century were the beavers, using their lodges and dams for their own purposes exclusively.

How did the country parson live? What was his house like? Like that of the better class of yeoman: a timber dwelling built on a frame, the spaces between the uprights and horizontals being either

THE PRIEST'S HOUSE

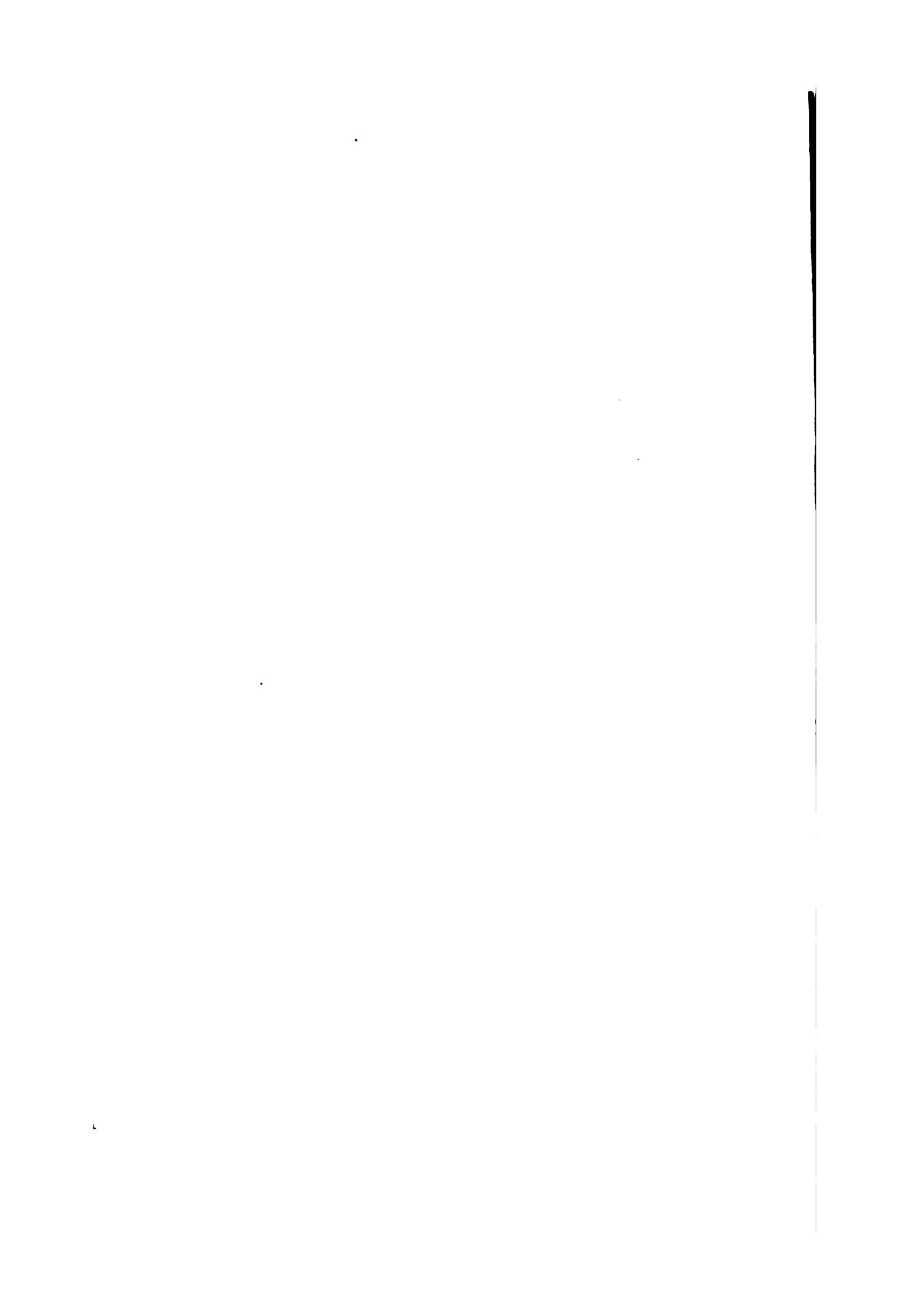
lathed and plastered outside and inside, or filled with clay stiffened with chopped reeds—not straw, as some writers think, because straw was used in winter as fodder for sheep and cattle, and was thus too valuable to be employed in building walls. Sometimes the floor was pitched with pebbles or with flint, then covered with a litter of grass or reeds; at other times, and far more frequently, the litter was spread over the bare earth, and into it all remnants from the table were thrown—fragments of meat and vegetables, bones, and other odds and ends attractive to the village scavengers, the pigs. You figure the dwelling-room as a hall, from which a ladder or staircase led to the sleeping-rooms under the roof, dim places where good health managed to sleep in company with a host of vermin, but made haste to rise at cockcrow and get out into the open air. Chimneys were rarely found except in castles and manor houses, so the priest's wood fire, burning on a clay hob, may have thrown up its carbon smoke into the air to teach his reverence how to sneeze, to irritate his eyes, and to find its way out of doors by whatever cranny or aperture it could reach, draught permitting. I do not know whether our parson allowed himself in winter the luxury of artificial light—a costly thing during the Middle Ages, for Thorold Rogers states that hard fats were four times as dear as the meat of animals, and that a pound of candles could only have been bought at nearly the price of a day's work. One thinks here of torches; but to add their smoke to that from the fire seems unreasonably disrespectful to one's forefathers.

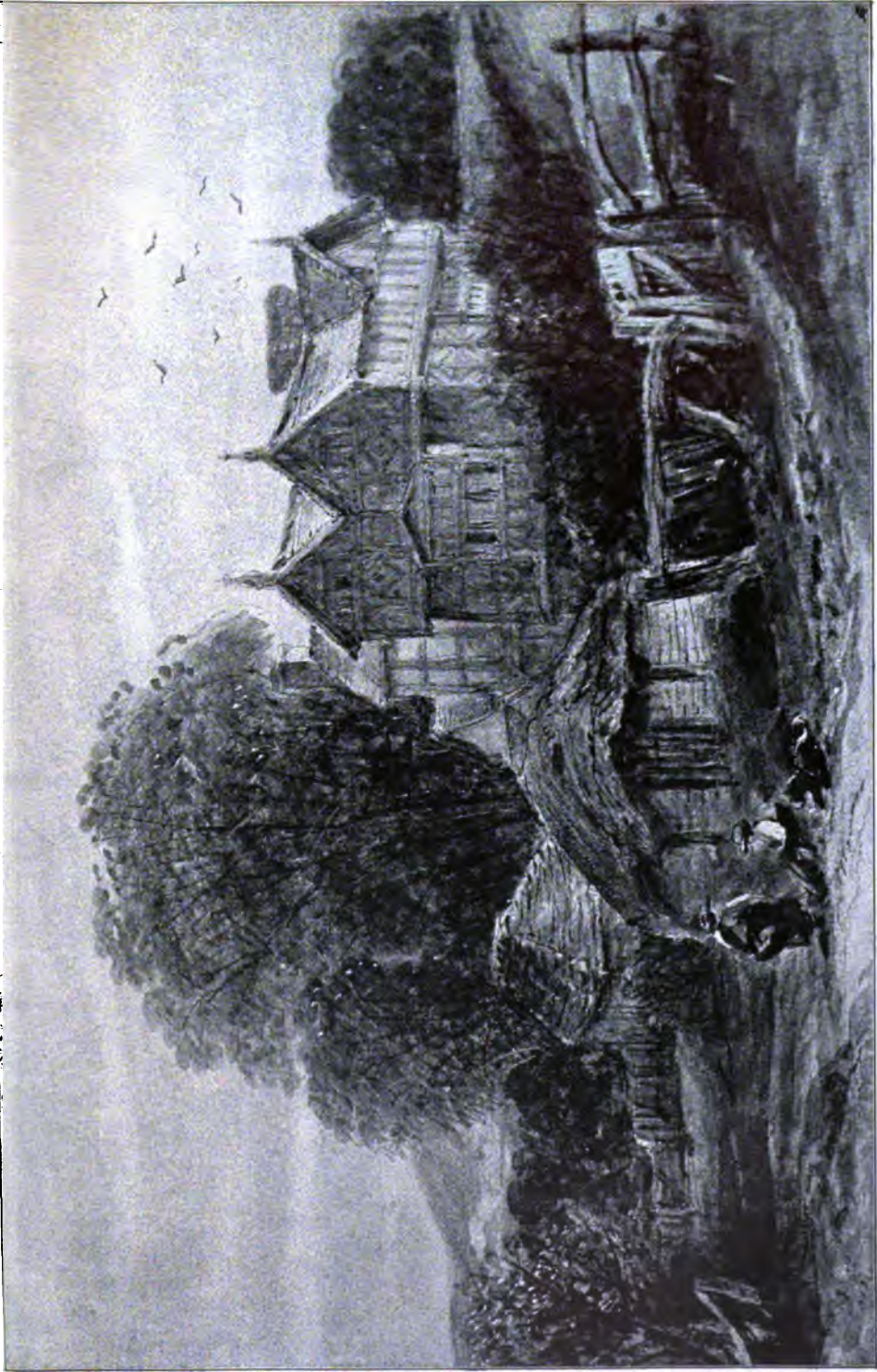
OLD ENGLAND

It may be that I have offended the etiquette of mediæval custom by speaking of the priest before I pay my respects to the manor lord, but my reason is that the parson was always on duty, while the lord of the manor was represented during the greater part of the year by his bailiff, who made his home in the great house, smiling at the chimney, and thanking his lucky stars that a river in spate could not carry away the good stone walls, strengthened with beams of oak. The bailiff was a great man, for his lord had usually several manors, and as he could not live in them all at the same time he was content that his bailiffs should be important as deputies, and shine out as manor lords at second hand. Each bailiff or beadle had much anxious work to do on a manor, ruling as Secretary of State over a little kingdom with an intricate system of government. As he represented the king, the manor lord, he administered the demesne in strict obedience to such rights as the king had over his subjects or tenants, either by ancient compact or more ancient custom ; but this required tact and care, because he knew well that tenants were tenacious of *their* inherited rights, and again because he was responsible to a Prime Minister, known as the steward, who kept watch over everything owned by the king, travelling from manor to manor, taking accounts and holding courts, and seeing that all was well with the machinery of government.

The manor system is easier to understand if we continue this figurative way of looking at it, and

PLATE LXXIII
HALF-TIMBERED MANOR HOUSE NEAR
LUDLOW IN SHROPSHIRE







THE MANORIAL SYSTEM

regard each mediæval village as a separate little nation and each series of scattered villages under one manor lord as a number of kingdoms belonging to one sovereign. The matter may be summed up thus :

- The lord of several manors = the King.
- His steward = the Prime Minister.
- The bailiff of one manor = a Secretary of State.
- The principal tenants = the nobles.
- Serfs and cottagers = the people.
- Shepherds and swineherds = the minor officials.
- The reeve = the people's representative.
- The parish priest = a Secretary of Peace.
- The miller = a Secretary of Home Affairs.

There are kings of two kinds, and the manor lord was a constitutional sovereign, not an autocrat. If his nobles and people respected his rights and their own, and did their duty towards him in the way agreed upon, he could not treat them with indignity and oust them from their lands. All tenants, from serfs to freemen, held their farms by fixity of tenure, subject only to the conditions just stated. Suppose a tenant murdered some one and fled the country : in this case his farm escheated to the manor king, and if rent was due the bailiff might obtain it by selling the runaway's stock and furniture. On the other hand, the murderer's wife and children might be considered fit tenants to be left in possession of the escheated rights and lands and privileges. This would probably have been a question for the manor court to decide. " Instead of any statute law," says

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Dr. Jessopp, "every manor was governed in the main by certain customs which had been handed down by tradition, and these customs it was the interest of every member of the community to keep inviolate. If any dispute arose it was settled, not by an appeal to any outside tribunal, but by bringing the cause before an assembly of the tenants—the *homagers*, as they were called, of the manor ; and though at these assemblies or courts of the manor the lord or his steward presided, he was by no means supreme : indeed, cases arose at times when the lord of the manor was actually censured for infringing upon the rights of the homage."

A great deal might be said about the manor courts, but Dr. Jessopp has given the substance of what laymen can understand. To go further is to be lost in a kind of mediæval Court of Chancery, where visitors on business are expected to waste time as resident victims. Amid a great many doubts, and cobwebs of criticism innumerable, some points seem to stand out clearly, and these Dr. Jessopp sums up in a few words. The Prime Minister of our kingdom was the judge, and settled the procedure of the court ; the Secretary of State, the bailiff, acted as Public Prosecutor for his master, the king ; while the nobles and people formed the jury. Further, the jury was obliged to serve, and any one who refused to be present, declining the service known as "suit of court," was fined. The judge, we may suppose, guided the jury, speaking of manor customs and traditions, and trying to get rid of spite and envy, as these would injure the

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COMMON RIGHTS

manor by producing unrest and ill-feeling among its population. But he had no control over the verdict of the court other than that which his personal character might win for him.

Another big subject is the land in its relation both to the manor king and to the manor people. The king, of course, owned the manor house and the lands immediately surrounding it; this demesne was a several estate, enclosed and occupied exclusively by him; he and his tenants divided the open fields—*i.e.*, the arable lands—pretty equally; and whenever the estate had natural meadow pasture, watered by streams, he held it as a rule in severalty, in his own right, without being joined in interest with any other person. But there was common pasture also, and Thorold Rogers tells us that generally the use of common pasture was without stint—*i.e.*, any tenant could put as many beasts as he liked on it, subject, no doubt, to the special needs and customs of the manor. For instance, when the common pasture was small and the number of sheep and cattle large, a right of commonage without stint would have turned a meadow into a waste without grass, and hence some limit would be placed on the number of animals that each tenant could turn out day by day upon the common. Further, the tenants themselves would be the first to suggest this procedure, because the lord was apt to be over-free with the use he made of the common. It is a frequent subject of complaint, says Rogers, "that the lord, being possessed of several meadows, saved his pasture for hay or summer

OLD ENGLAND

feed, and cropped the land bare by the multitude of cattle and sheep which he put on the common pasture."

This was a real grievance, and we may be sure that the manor folk did not forget to speak out boldly in open court, and so invite their lord to censure the bailiff, his deputy in this matter. The tenants had another bone of contention to pick with their ruler, who kept an innocent-sounding thing called a dovecot, with as much mischief in it as in a flight of locusts. I have seen myself in Sussex an ancient dovecot with more than a thousand nests, so it is easy to imagine the flocks of pigeons that visited the corn lands. These birds were sold at a farthing each, and a lord could punish in his court any one who tried to vie with him as a pigeon-fancier. There seems to have been no common right in these birds during any season of the year, and I can't learn in what way tenants were compensated, not only for loss on crops, but for loss of time also, because each tenant's children must have been kept on guard in the cornfields to scare the pigeons.

If we follow the flight of these birds over a little manor kingdom, we note first of all the arable land divided into open fields, sometimes two of them, sometimes three; and each field is split up into divisions, into shots or furlongs, and these in their turn are subdivided into cultivated strips a pole wide and one acre in surface area; and because these strips belong to different tenants, a narrow balk of turf separates one holding or allotment from another. Every kind of tenant is represented in the

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PLATE LXXIV
IFFLEY WATER-MILL, OXFORDSHIRE





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SERFS AND COTTAGERS

Open fields. Villeins or serfs have their virgates or yard-lands; cottagers have other strips, the nobles or free tenants have theirs; the parson has a portion too; and even the manor lord joins in the general competition that takes place year by year in the arena of the arable lands, where each tenant tries to grow better crops than his neighbours. The rent paid here and in other fertile parts of the estate is very seldom more than sixpence a year for an acre, and some tenants, like the cottagers and serfs, pay their dues chiefly in *kind*; that is to say, they do work on certain days for their lord without payment, and on other given days they bring farm produce to the bailiff, perhaps two hens at Christmas, twenty eggs at Easter, and three or four quarters of oats on November 30, St. Andrew's Day. The money paid in labour is sometimes very heavy, amounting to thirty days in the course of the year, and these duties take place precisely at the time at which the serfs and cottagers must be anxious about their own ploughing and their own harvests. In the fourteenth century labour dues were commuted into money payments, and this arrangement was not unknown in earlier days. For all that, it is almost inexplicable at times how the serf attends to his own farming and yet manages to pay all his dues; but it is common sense to suppose that while he is engaged on his lord's business his wife and children work in his allotment.

One point concerning the open fields must be kept constantly in mind. Although tenants have fixity of tenure of their lands, they know that on a given

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day in the harvest season all their allotments come under the right of commonage ; and if they do not clear off their crops by that specified time, " the lord in some cases, the whole body of tenants in others, may turn their sheep or cattle into the common fields and devour whatever is left of the tenant's harvest." I quote from Dr. Jessopp, and his words introduce the whole question of common rights—a subject dealt with in the next chapter. It is enough to say here that the system of commonage shows our manor king and his people in a position of reciprocal benefit and restraint, helpful on the one hand, watchful on the other. Neither is free to do precisely as he likes ; all are restrained for the good of all by customs and traditions, and each benefits himself by upholding the rights to be enjoyed by the community as a whole. The lord has rights, but not exclusive rights, in the common, in the waste, and over the forest or wood—no doubt greater than his subjects can claim, but yet to a large extent conditioned and regulated by his tenants' rights and privileges ; for each parcel of manor land carries with it a share in the meadow, in the profits of the waste and common, as well as in the rights of commonalty belonging to the woods, like the right of pannage for pigs, of gathering sticks for fuel, of lopping and topping certain trees, and of cutting turf and peat. All these rights are limited and regulated ; they begin on a certain day every year, and end at another stated time.

Thorold Rogers draws an excellent picture of a manor in Oxfordshire at the close of the thirteenth

CUXHAM MANOR

century, called Cuxham Manor, and belonging to the warden and scholars of Merton College :

“The two principal tenants, Quartermain and Pageham, each hold the fourth part of a military fee within the limits of the manor. If a scutage is imposed, they have each to pay ten shillings—*i.e.*, the fourth part of the assessment on an entire fee. They made suit in the court. If their heirs are under age, the college has the guardianship of those heirs ; if they have a female heir, the same persons have the right of disposing of her in marriage. The prior of Holy Trinity, of Wallingford, holds a messuage, a mill, and six acres of land in free arms—*i.e.*, under no other obligation or liability than the offering of prayers on behalf of the donor. A free tenant has a messuage, with three and three quarter acres, the portion of his wife. The rent of this is three shillings a year. He has another messuage with nine acres, for which he pays annually a pound of pepper, the cost of which at the time was about one shilling or one and sixpence. The rector of the parish church has part of a furrrow—*i.e.*, one of the divisions by which the common arable field is parcelled out. For this he pays twopence a year. Another tenant holds a cottage in the demesne under the obligation of keeping two lamps lighted in the church. Another person is tenant at will of the parish mill, at forty shillings a year. The rest of the tenants are serfs (*nativi*) or cottagers (*coterelli*)—thirteen of the former and eight of the latter. Five of these tenants appear to be widows, and the whole manor, omitting the two tenants of

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military fees, appears to have contained twenty-four households. Each of the serfs has a messuage and half a virgate of land at least—*i.e.*, certainly not less than twelve acres of arable. His rent is almost entirely corn and labour, though he makes two money payments, a halfpenny on November 12, and a penny whenever he brews. He is to pay a quarter of seed-wheat at Michaelmas; a peck of wheat, four bushels of oats, and three hens on November 12; and at Christmas a cock and two hens, and two-pennyworth of bread. He is to plough, sow, and till half an acre of his lord's land, and give his services, as he is bidden by the bailiff, except on Sundays and feast days. He is to reap three days with one man at his own charges in harvest-time. He is not to marry son or daughter, to sell ox, calf, horse, or colt, to cut down oak or ash, without the lord's consent. If one estimates these services and payments in money of the time, they amount to nearly nine shillings, of which three shillings at least must be set down for the house and curtilage upon it. The labour rent for the land is therefore about sixpence an acre in money value. The soil of Cuxham is very good wheat land, a loam lying at the base of the Chiltern Hills, and yielding in good harvests what was at that time a very full return, *viz.*, thirteen bushels of wheat to the acre, twenty of barley, sixteen of oats, and fourteen of peas."

It is worth noting that the land held by the serfs amounts to about 170 acres, and that for at least three generations a serf acts as a bailiff, the office being transmitted from father to son, till at last

PLATE LXXV
MORWICK WATER-MILL,
NORTHUMBERLAND





THE SERF

the family perishes in the plague of 1348-49, and Merton College inherits all the goods and chattels. Many transactions of great importance were entrusted to this serf-bailiff. He farmed the college estate, collected rents and services from its tenants, supplied year by year an accurate balance-sheet, and trained his son to be as honest and efficient as he was himself in all ways and matters. This, please note, is but one of many surprises that we come upon in the history of the serf in England. Theoretically he was not allowed to hold land; in reality he not only occupied land as a tenant, but had a very definite tenant right, so that his lord could not oust him if he paid his dues and duties in accordance with manorial custom. In theory, again, he was not permitted to serve in the militia; yet warrior kings did not hesitate to enlist him, and at times he rose to high rank in the army, like Sir Robert Sale, who was Captain-General of Norwich during the siege of 1381.

Yet some writers are of opinion that the mediæval serf is a person to be pitied, and they do not even see that serfage was necessary at a time when frequent wars drew too many freemen from their lands, and when many other things encouraged the vagabond inclinations of a nomadic people. The serf was at least a national guarantee that work on English farms would not be stayed by wars, as it might be by plagues; for no lord of a manor would permit more serfs than he could spare to join the army. Vast stretches of country had still to be reclaimed from forests and wastes, and the labour

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done in this way by villeins—woodmen, and drovers, and swineherds—can never be rated at too high a value in English history. Unquestionably the serf or villein was essential to England's progress, as much so as the permanent buildings on manor farms.

The Church never understood this matter, and was usually at variance with the State concerning it. There were times when it encouraged a systematic evasion of villeinage, as in the middle of the twelfth century, when the Constitutions of Clarendon, re-asserting the will and authority of the State, put a stop to the ordination of serfs. At a later time a serf could enter Orders, with his lord's permission, like the far-famed Robert Grosseteste, who in 1235 became Bishop of Lincoln, a diocese which then included the present sees of Peterborough and Oxford, and part of Ely also. Robert Grosseteste, a serf's son, believed in England for the English, so he opposed the Roman Court, became the people's friend, and won influence over other classes by his sincerity and his vast learning. Perhaps I shall be told that certain things pressed heavily on serfs, above all the custom known as *merchet*, by virtue of which he could not marry his daughter without buying his lord's sanction. Yet these incidents must not be looked at from a standpoint of modern sentiment. Uncle Tom's Cabin has no place at all on an English manor of the thirteenth century. It is furnished with pretty emotions, it is decorated with admirable maxims; but the war of life still goes on, and the pressure of its competition

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WHAT IS SLAVERY?

afflicts a great many women and men, generating a sweating system here and a custom of low wages there ; and these things certainly are worse to us than mediæval serfage was to its *nativi* and *coterelli*.

Slavery is a question not merely of usage sanctioned by law ; it is a thing also that shows itself in results, even when it is sternly forbidden by law. Thousands of clerks to-day are slaves, because they dare not run the risk of losing a position which thousands wish to fill, though it offers little hope for the future. They are thus bound to a life without promise, just as the old-time serf was bound to bad land and good by law and custom. Perhaps the serf suffered as they do, perhaps he felt the gathering humiliations that accompany a revolt against thwarted aims and aspirations ; but he had his farm and his common rights ; and his patience in the end was rewarded, since the copyholder of the fourteenth century was the villein of the thirteenth. Has the farm labourer of to-day a position equal to the serf's ? Does he feel that not less than twelve acres of arable land are his, and that he has other interests besides, giving him a share in the profits of the soil ? Are there not many clerks, many brain-workers of many kinds, who would gladly welcome such a means of escape from city offices, even although some hindrances were placed by law to prevent each tenant from being in all respects a free man ?

However, we have still to look at the serfs and cottagers in their homes, to watch them in their festivals, and to see their village as a whole. Think

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of the huts and houses as built near a river, or along a public road, not in rows nor in clusters, but in a kind of orderly disorder, each dwelling separated from its neighbour, and having around it an enclosed piece of land, its croft and toft. Before each door stands a midden, a dunghill, from which a stream of filth trickles down a little uneven pathway; and none cares when it finds a crevice into the well and pollutes the water. Barefooted children paddle in this manure, and clean themselves afterwards with the litter of grass and reeds on the floor inside their cottage, the door of which stands wide open in spring and summer, but ajar during the rest of the year, so that smoke may escape while the housewife cooks and brews.

The furniture in the better-class cottage is simple and rude, and consists of a few chests that hug the walls, some farming tools stacked in corners, and overhead a bacon-rack fastened to the beams. As to the poorer homes, where the serfs and cottagers live, they are mere cabins or huts, "built of posts wattled and plastered with clay and mud, with an upper storey of poles, reached by a ladder. In the taxing rolls of Edward I., preserved numerously in the Record Office, the household furniture of such cottages is inventoried, and valued at a very few shillings. It consists of a few articles of furniture, generally of home manufacture, some coarse bedding, and a few domestic implements, mostly earthenware. The most valuable articles in use were copper or brass pots, and a few common iron utensils, all metals being exceedingly dear;

VILLAGE DISCOMFORTS

and iron, relatively speaking, the dearest of all" (Thorold Rogers).

If life in such homes was rude and coarse, I know not how to describe the dirt, for even in public taverns, where the comfort of travellers was considered, rats and mice were a curse, and other vermin a dread of vast multitude. An Englishman during the fourteenth century composed a manual of French conversation, and from it M. J. J. Jusserand quotes in his very valuable book on "English Wayfaring Life in the Middle Ages." The passages cited are few in number, but their insect population even exceeds that of the German soldiers who were taken prisoners by the French during the siege of Metz. French doctors and nurses used to say that the German troops could not help walking far and fast, because they were hurried along by "innumerable activities," that nipped them shrewdly. As much may be said of Englishmen during the Middle Ages. Their fleas were a numerous motive power. When a traveller came to a roadside inn he thought first of all about his skin. Were there any fleas, or bugs, or other vermin? "No, sir, please God," replied the host, "for I make bold that you shall be well and comfortably lodged here—save that there is a great peck of rats and mice." The rascal knew very well which vermin his clients feared most. At another hostelry, says M. Jusserand, "the conversation between two travellers who have just slept in the same bed shows what a trouble the fleas were: 'William, undress and wash your legs, and then dry them with a cloth,

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and rub them well for love of the fleas, that they may not leap on your legs, for there is a peck of them lying in the dust under the rushes. . . . Hi! the fleas bite me so! and do me great harm, for I have scratched my shoulders till the blood flows.'”

As these things happened in good inns, imagine the nimbleness of life in peasants' cottages! And think what babies suffered in their cradles before time had given their bodies a protective armour of dirt! The plague, too, was carried about by fleas, bugs, and rats, so that the churchyard was ever the most populated part of a manor village.

Yet people were not unhappy, somehow. Ancient records do not speak much of suicide and desperation. Suicide became a common thing when luxurious ideals of comfort spread through the land, causing those who had little luck to envy all who had more, and to pass from a fever of self-pity into madness. Eliminate envy and self-pity, and you will get rid of most suicides. The rate per thousand of the population might not sink to the mediæval level, because the Church in early times had a strong restraining influence. Suicides and murderers were buried at night and at cross-roads, and for the following reasons: Pagans of the Teutonic race put their altars at the cross-roads, and criminals were offered as sacrifices to their gods, so the place of execution was by the altars. Then Christian teachers, wishing to impress the popular mind with the horror of crime and of suicide, took a lesson from this Teutonic custom and another from the Roman burial by night, every other Christian

VILLAGE FESTIVALS

interment being a daylight ceremony. The word *funeral* seems to imply that it was used originally for criminals and suicides, being derived from the Latin *funeralis*, a torchlight procession, from *funis*, a torch.

Religious ceremonies of many kinds entered deep into the life of mediæval villages. The great festival days were kept in a public manner, and after them as popular amusements came a good many games and sports; but you will see in the chapter on archery that "unthrifty games," like quoits and cockfighting, were discouraged by statutes and proclamations, so that they might not interfere with the long-bow and its conscriptive value in national defence. Dancing was much in vogue; and if the poor imitated the nobles it was dancing so coarse in gesture that the less we think about it the better. Then there were travelling minstrels, wayfaring buffoons, itinerant jugglers and tumblers, peripatetic pardoners with their save-alls, dancing bears, village feasts and fairs, religious plays, and all in keeping with the rudeness of the period.

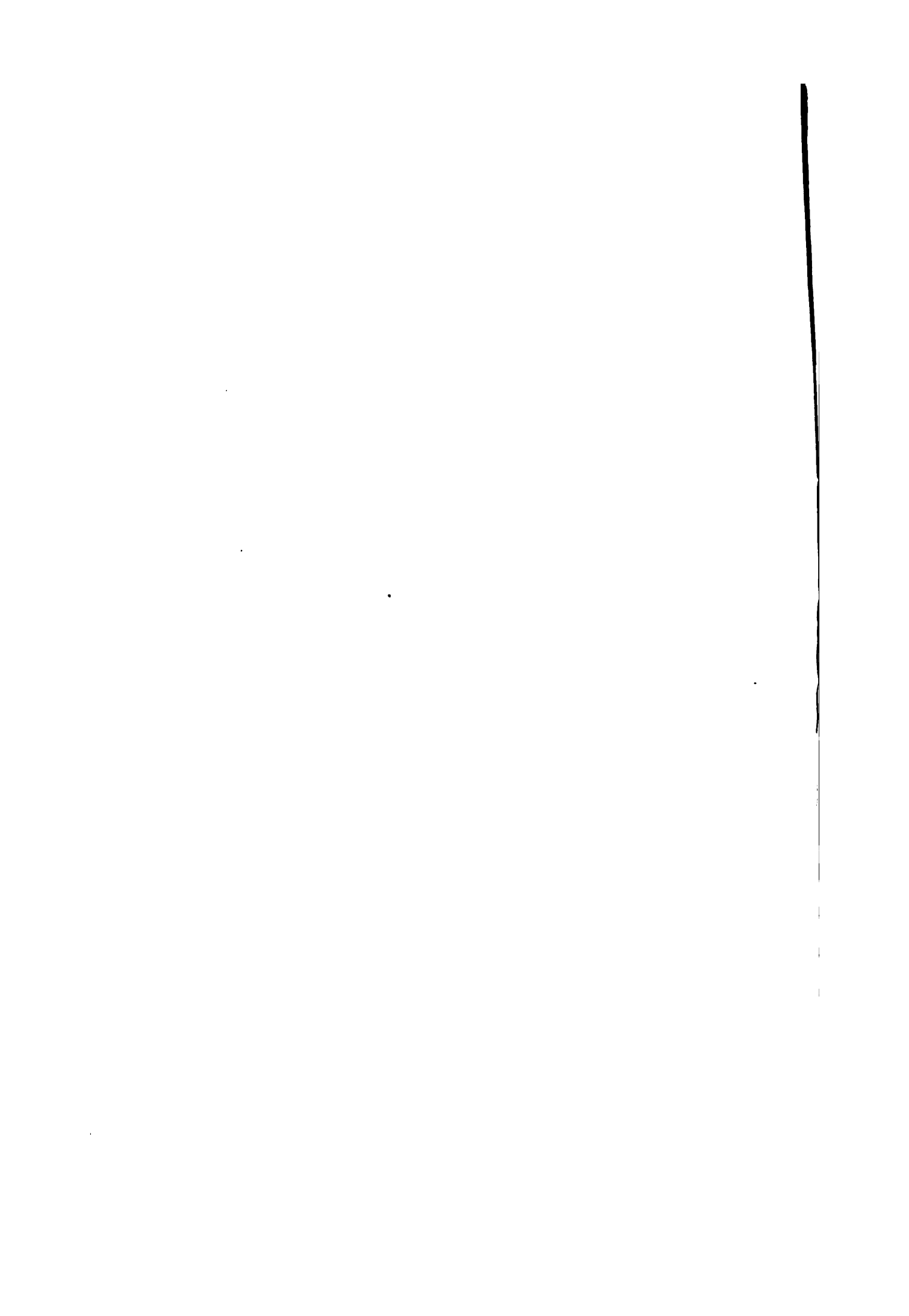
There was a great festival at shearing-time, and another as great after the harvest. History does not tell us how sheep-shearing was celebrated, but several foreign visitors described the harvest-home. Hentzner, for example, who was in England at the close of the sixteenth century, relates what he saw one day in the neighbourhood of Windsor. "As we were returning to our inn, we happened to meet some country people rejoicing over their harvest-home: their last load of corn they crown with flowers,

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having besides an image richly dressed, by which perhaps they signify Ceres ; this they keep moving about, while the men and women, and men- and maid-servants, riding through the streets in the cart, shout as loud as they can till they arrive at the barn." Moresin, another foreign student of early English customs, saw peasants bring home from the fields a figure made of corn, around which the men and women sang and capered, a piper or a drummer walking ahead of them. In the north the corn figure was called a kern-baby, a corruption of corn-baby, just as the corn-supper became known as the kern-supper, or, again, as the churn-supper. The harvest feast in some places was a "mell-supper," from the French word *mesler* to mingle together, masters and servants being very free with one another at that jolly gathering. At the mell-supper, says Bourne, "the servant and his master are alike, and everything is done with equal freedom; they sit at the same table, converse freely together, and spend the remaining part of the night in dancing and singing, without any difference or distinction. There was a custom among the heathens much like this at the gathering of their harvest, when the servants were indulged with their liberty, and put upon an equality with their masters for a certain time. Probably both of them originated from the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles." If you desire to continue this subject further, read Strutt's "Sports and Pastimes of the People of England" and "Brand's Observations on Bourne's Vulg. Antiq."

At these festivities a wonderful amount of beer

PLATE LXXVI
GEORGIAN WATER-MILL IN ESSEX



MAY DAY

was drunk by everybody—home-brewed beer, pure enough, but generous with headaches. Even in leper hospitals—and many lazar houses were scattered about the country—beer was served out as a matter of course, and in goodly quantities. Drunkenness not a little was prevalent in villages, and it caused just indignation among the Puritan reformers of the sixteenth century, like Phillip Stubbes. This good man was a foe to every kind of popular amusement, because he saw vice in all sports and games and festivals. Stubbes shall draw for us a picture of the May games :

“ Against Maie-day, Whitsunday, or some other time of the year, every parish, towne, or village, assemble themselves, both men, women, and children ; and either all together, or dividing themselves into companies, they goe some to the woods and groves, some to the hills and mountaines, some to one place, some to another, where they spend all the night in pleasant pastimes, and in the morning they return, bringing with them birche boughes and branches of trees, to deck their assemblies withal. But the chieftest jewel they bring from thence is the Maie-pole, which they bring home with great veneration, as thus—they have twentie or fourtie yoake of oxen, every oxe having a sweete nosegaie of flowers tied to the tip of his hornes, and these oxen draw home the May-poale, their stinking idol rather, which they covered all over with flowers and hearbes, bound round with strings from the top to the bottome, and sometimes it was painted with variable colours, having two or three

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hundred men, women, and children following it with great devotion. And thus equipped it was reared with handkerchiefes and flagges streaming on the top, they strawe the ground round about it, they bind green boughs about it, they set up summer halles, bowers, and arbours hard by it, and then fall they to banquetting and feasting, to leaping and dancing about it, as the heathen people did at the dedication of their idolls. I have heard it crediblie reported, by men of great gravity, credite, and reputation, that of fourtie, threescore, or an hundred maides going to the wood, there have scarcely the third part of them returned home again as they went."

It is very likely that mischief went hand in hand with the high spirits that ruled over these festivals. But we learn from Stow that the great Mayings enjoyed by the citizens of London were made by the governors and masters of the city, who were staid men, and that the principal May-pole was set up triumphantly in Cornhill before the parish church of St. Andrew, which was thence called St. Andrew Undershaft. The May-pole stood in all towns and villages during the whole cycle of the year, and no violence was ever offered to it.

But these amusements came to the people only at given times, while there was one excitement which seems to have endured all the year round. The shrewish housewife was common everywhere, and she made the hours lively for those who lived near to her. It was not without reason that English-

THE DUCKING-STOOL

men during the Middle Ages thought with admiration of the unknown inventor of the ducking-stool. This instrument is mentioned in Domesday Book. Its purpose was to cool the ardour of expert shrews and scolds, who were fastened in it and then plunged into a pond or river, the number of dips being regulated by the degree of venom in the victim's temper and tongue; and this punishment was so successful in helping men to hold their own tentatively at home that other enemies of domestic quietness, like bakers who gave under-weight and bad flour, were "pooled." The odd thing is that modern women imagine they have greater power than their foremothers ever had. Of one thing they may be certain: they will never rule like the mediæval women who forced their husbands to find shelter behind a rampart of ducking-stools.

There is reason to believe that the miller's wife was very often feared because of her whipping tongue. Perhaps she took too much pride in her husband's position as the most important lay tenant of the manor, or perhaps she resented his unpopularity. The Miller was not liked, as a rule. Legends and ballads referred to him as a wealthy villager with a grasping hand, not over-honest in his business methods. The miller was usually a tenant at will, and the rent he paid—about forty shillings a year—was high for those days; but his lord repaired the mill, and found the wheels, or the sails, and the mill-stones—a costly liability in the thirteenth century, when timber mills were often damaged by storms and floods. It was no in-

OLD ENGLAND

frequent thing for a mill-wheel to be carried away by a river in spate, and hence the manor lord protected himself by making the use of the mill an obligation on all the tenants. He could not charge a high rent if the miller were uncertain of good regular custom. But tenants also needed protection, and so we find that the jury of the court leet kept watch over the miller, and rated him soundly when he used a false measure or took an excessive toll.

As time went on, and manor discipline became weaker, villagers objected to the compulsory use of the mill. At times they rebelled against it, and started a rival mill, as you will find, for instance, in the history of Leicestershire.

Last of all, let us take a glance at Chaucer's miller :

The Mellere was a stout carl for the nones,
Ful big he was of braun, and eek of boones ;
That prevede wel, for over-al [everywhere] ther he cam,
At wrastlyng he wolde bere away the ram.
He was schort schuldred, broode, a thikke knarre [knotted
fellow],
Ther was no dore that he nold heve of harre [hinge],
Or breke it at a rennyng with his heed.
His berd as ony sowe or fox was reed,
And therto brood, as though it were a spade.
Upon the cop right of his nose he hade
A werte, and theron stood a tuft of heres,
Reede as the berstles of a souwes eeres.
His nose-thurles blake were and wyde.
A swerd and a bocler baar he by his side ;
His mouth as wyde was as a gret forneys ;
He was a jangler, and a golyardeys [riotous fellow],
And that was most of synne and harlotries.

THE MILLER

Wel could he stele corn, and tollen thries ;
And yet he had a thombe of gold pardé.
A whight cote and a blewe hood wered he.
A baggepipe wel could he blow and sowne,
And therwithal he brought us out of towne.

It is clear that such a miller as this one needed a court leet to keep him in order. That was a door which he could not break by running against it with his head !

CHAPTER X

THE REIGN OF THE SHEEPFOLDS AND SHEPHERDS

FOR many generations—namely, from the thirteenth century to at least the middle of the seventeenth—the most momentous time in England every year was the shearing season, because wool was the nation's wealth; without it the State would have been feeble indeed, always on the edge of bankruptcy.

Shepherds were Lords of the Exchequer, and sheep the public to be fleeced; on their backs the credit of England grew strong. The wool was firm in fibre, pliant and elastic, and therefore easy to be weaved. All the world wished to buy it. English wool, like English archery, was not to be beaten anywhere in Europe. Sheep-farming had yet to be developed in Saxony; it had but little success in the plains of Flanders; Spaniards did their best, but wool from their sheep was brittle, and none could weave it without a good admixture of English material. So the European trade in wool became a vast monopoly for England; and because there was no fear that England's success would be weakened by competition, by foreign rivalry,

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TAXES ON WOOL

Parliament was able to ask from foreign clients a huge export duty on wool, which in the fifteenth century was often as much as 100 shillings on each sack of 364 lb. By these duties all the wars of the Edwards and Henrys were mainly financed ; and it was in wool that money poured from England into the revenues of the Papal Court. Our forefathers used to say that London Bridge was built on wool-packs ; and on the same foundation the country at large rested for its security. The Golden Fleece would have been the best of all insignias for the mediæval kings of England.

Sheep-farming had a great influence on everything with which this book is concerned. It helped not only to enrich the Church, but to repair roads, to make bridges, and to support towns and manors. Whenever the shepherd ruled with success, as in the Cotswold districts, and in Lincolnshire, there you will find beautiful rustic homes, handsome architecture of all kinds, and a warm hospitality, a certain generous habit of accepting life as a charity to man.

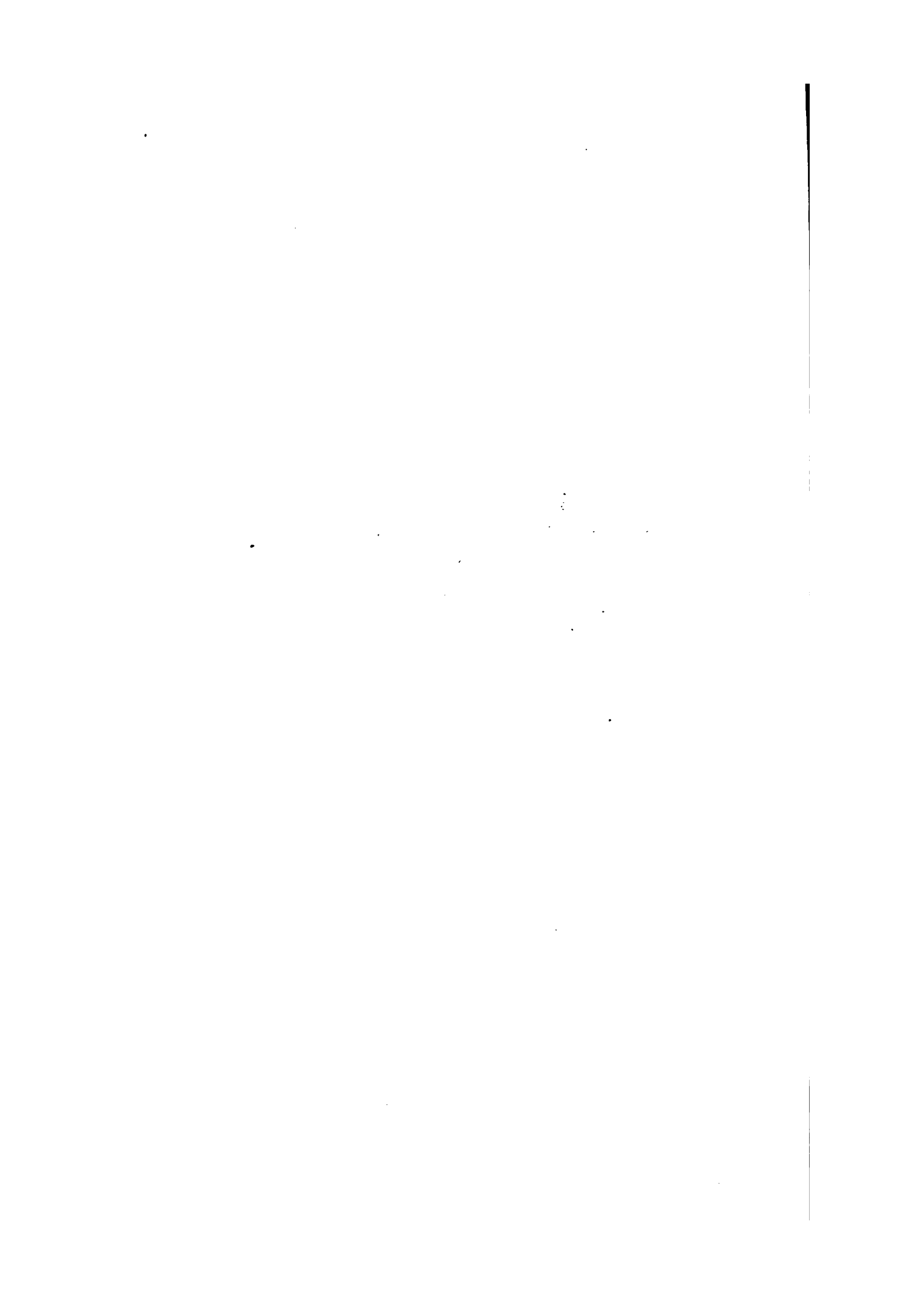
It has been said that the English people in their homes have ever been rather careless with money, inclined to live up to their incomes ; and if this be a national vice, blame the sheepfolds and shepherds, for it was they that handed down through the centuries a tradition of good cakes and ale. There was not poverty enough in the Middle Ages to breed in our English race a passion for thrift, a longing to be frugal ; and when we recall to mind the cold avarice and cunning to be found among

OLD ENGLAND

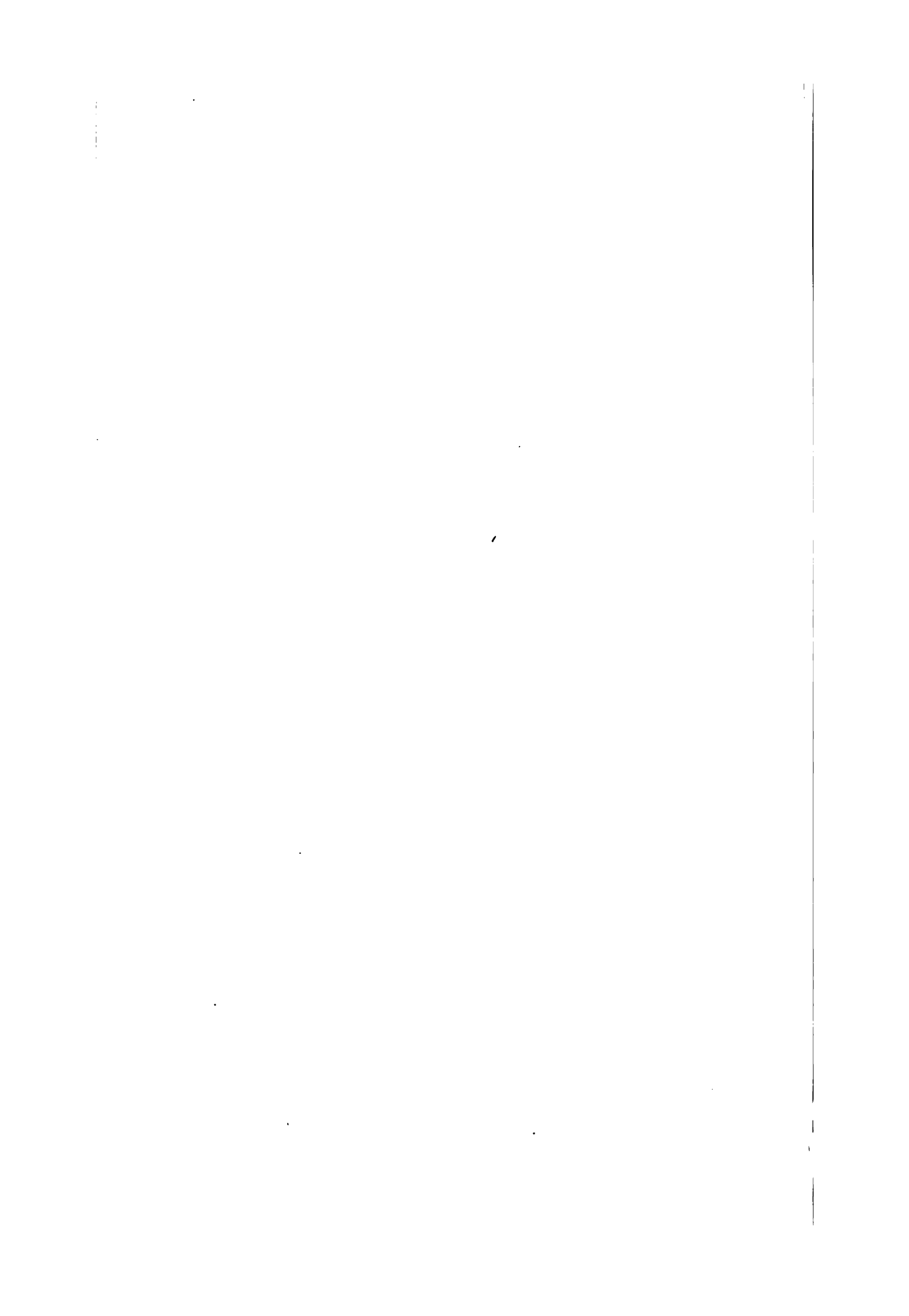
French peasants, a great deal may be said in favour of the easier economy that Englishmen have practised. Even to-day, now that English farming is depressed, many an old village has a serene look. There is nothing mean, nothing makeshift and stingy, in its cottages and homesteads. Under Free Trade, so called, peasants have been sacrificed to the street-bred classes; yet a thousand villages smile to this day with an old-fashioned gladness.

It is true that their pleasantness varies much in different parts of the country, and is just a little severe in those districts where the type of house belongs to the Cotswold manner, which is sterner than the Kentish and Surrey styles. For all that, the Cotswolds have a smile of their own, and their sheep-farming outlived the best times of the English wool trade. When that industry declined many villages received their death-blow, as in Leicestershire, where Nichols and other historians saw hamlets not only deserted, but without trace of a dwelling. All had gone. Yet this decline of prosperity was not bad in the long run for Leicestershire farmers; it roused them up, made them experimental and eager to get on; and we shall see that a Leicestershire yeoman in the eighteenth century did great things for the improvement of sheep and cattle. For this reason the illustrations to this chapter are mainly scenes in the county of Leicester. One, a delicious picture fresh as the May wind, is "A Sunny Day in the Meadows," near Mount Sorrel, with water in the foreground, and two barges sheltered by tall lush grasses. Then there

PLATE LXXVII
SUNNY DAY IN THE LEICESTERSHIRE
MEADOWS







ENGLISH HUSBANDRY

are two sheep-farms at Newtown Linford ; and one shows a cluster of venerable cottages, older than Elizabeth's time, I believe, and with the quaintest little windows, like openings into the nests of mediæval dovecots. Plate 80 represents a shepherd's cottage at Normanton-on-Soar, Nottinghamshire. To these charming pictures we must add the pastoral scenes in other chapters, and particularly Plates 9, 10, and 57.

There was little change in English husbandry from the thirteenth to the seventeenth century ; it moved along stereotyped lines, using the same tools and the same traditional methods. A writer on agriculture in the thirteenth century looked forward to a time when land would be fertile enough to bear annually a crop of corn ; but in the farm records of mediæval England no such land has been met with. The general custom, as Mr. Thorold Rogers tells us, was to alternate crops over a period of three years. The first year wheat was grown ; the second, peas or vetches, beans, barley, or oats ; then the soil was kept fallow for a year. This procedure was inevitable, because English farmers had then no choice in varying the rotation of their crops. They had neither artificial grasses nor winter roots. But this narrowness of range in the matter of arable produce had the effect of causing farmers to set the greatest store by their live stock, sheep, cattle, horses, swine, geese, and poultry.

There was no improvement in farming till the seventeenth century, when new influences came

OLD ENGLAND

from Holland, bringing with them the cultivation of winter roots and of flower gardens. But the odd thing is that the best periods of English husbandry came under the old set methods, the most noteworthy one of all lasting from the fifteenth century to the first quarter of the sixteenth. This was the Golden Age in the reign of the sheepfolds and shepherds, if we interpret the wages earned and the price of wool by the cost of the necessaries of life.

Yet English sheep had one thing in common with English farming: they improved little, and left much to be desired. We shall see anon that they were only about one-half the size of our modern sheep. What, then, were the real causes of England's unrivalled success in this branch of agriculture? Climate and soil were important factors, but of less value, probably, than the following circumstances:

1. English landowners, above all in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, farmed their estates at their own risk and cost. This custom was not without exceptions, it is true. Sometimes land and stock were let out together, and tenants at the end of their leases had to give back the stock or its equivalent in money. Under these conditions tenants and landlords were eager to put down marauders; and as sheep are defenceless animals, easy to harm and steal, it is not hard to see the bearing of agrarian theft on the present subject.

2. The communal lands had a good influence over peasants, giving them a personal concern in the

COMMON RIGHTS

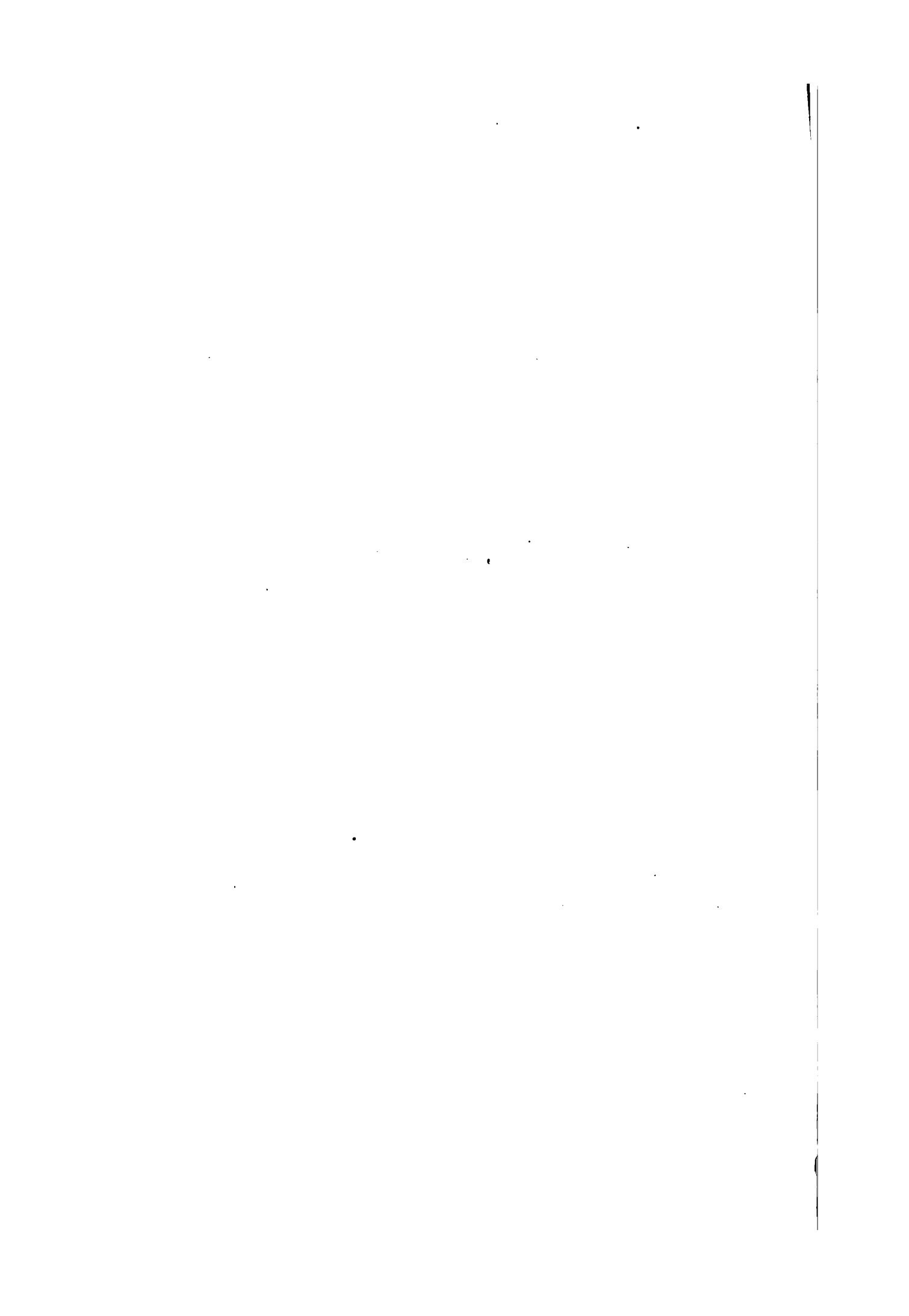
soil and its produce. In early times communal lands were general, and their privileges were greatly valued. At the present time there is much misunderstanding everywhere as to the nature of these privileges, and the way in which they were enjoyed by the people. It is popularly believed that all inhabitants of a manor could be quite free-and-easy with the rights of commonage, could use them as they pleased at all seasons of the year, turning upon the common anything they liked—a “gagle” of geese, a “dryft” of tame swine, a “harras” of horses, a “tribe” of goats, a “kendel” of young cats, a “pace” of asses, a “route” of wolves, a “bevy” of roes, a “rag” of colts, or a flock of sheep. But there was no unlimited freedom of this kind. Every right of commonage was guarded by custom and regulation ; only tenants could use the right of pasture, and the number of sheep and cattle and geese that each holding could send was fixed by ordinance, and if any one abused his privilege he was pounced upon by his fellows, who were exceedingly watchful and jealous in all these matters. None was allowed so to enjoy his right as to harm the other tenants ; and each benefited himself by guarding the rest from the tyranny or usurpation of any one. There was, for instance, the right of cutting turf for fuel, or of gathering sticks, or of lopping and topping certain trees, or of gathering reeds and bracken to renew a thatch ; but shrewd tenants could not trade in these rights by acting as paid deputies for careless or idle members of the community. That would have led

OLD ENGLAND

to a wide abuse of privilege, the very thing against which the whole manor was united in opposition. Defend one, defend all, was the motto. Besides the rights which I have mentioned, there were others of equal value, particularly that of pannage in the woods—that is, the right of feeding swine on the acorns and beech mast, or sheep and cattle on the forest grass; but these common privileges began on a given day every year, and ended on another fixed day, and the area over which they extended was defined as clearly as a cricket ground is at the present hour. Even the open fields where tenants held strips of arable land became common for a time after a given day in the harvest season, and if any holders were so careless as to forget this fact and to leave their corn lying or standing, they did so at their peril, for the other tenants were free on that specified day to turn their live stock into the field to feed upon the stubble.

Last of all, as almost every worker on a manor estate had fixity of tenure in a parcel of land, these common rights, though limited in all cases, were in a wide sense popular; they appealed to everybody, from the parish priest to the serf; and this was why they acted as a national education that gave rustics a feeling that they were free and important, and that they ought to unite together and keep together in defence of law and order. In other words, all the inhabitants of a manor became as eager as great landlords were that agrarian theft and injury should be made uncommon; and Thorold Rogers expressly states, after studying mediæval

PLATE LXXVIII
AT NEWTOWN LINFORD, LEICESTERSHIRE





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LAND THEFT UNCOMMON

farming accounts by the thousand, that agrarian robberies actually were infrequent in England during the Middle Ages, even in times of dearth, as during the famine years from 1315 to 1321. Other kinds of theft, very often accompanied by violence on the high-roads, were as common as blackberries in autumn; but as crime in mediæval Italy was tempered by a popular delight in the fine arts, so English crime was relieved by a feeling of respect for the soil and its produce. To this rule there was one exception—namely, the Border Country, where rogues under arms made no distinction between any acts that brought stolen goods to the common stock of lawlessness. And the Scotch raiders were not the only offenders; the native English were probably worse, for the Border districts were overrun with wastrels, known as *skulks* of thieves, *rayfuls* of knaves. But in other parts of England farmers had little to fear from human wolves on their lands, though they had to keep a sharp lookout when they travelled by cross-roads between two market villages. Nothing can be more surprising than this rarity of agricultural robbers at a time when the State was always in a panic over the forest rovers and their misdeeds on the public highways and byways. It shows how united each manor was in its system of self-defence; and it explains the successes won year by year by sheep-folds. Farmers, having few acts of violence to contend against, were able to give all their time and care to their flocks and herds.

They were harassed much, then as now, by

OLD ENGLAND

sickness among their flocks. "Rot" was a common complaint; and in or about the year 1280 "scab" appeared. Thorold Rogers says that farmers of the earliest period had a vague idea that the presence of a small white snail in the grass was dangerous, and that the most modern experiments have discovered in a small water-snail the carrier of the fluke. Further, "our forefathers advised that sheep should be kept under cover from November to April, and should not be allowed to go on the ground between mid-August and November, till the sun had well purified the land. The sheep were fed under cover on coarse hay, wheat and oat straw, on pea or vetch haulm."

At first glance it may seem that our ancestors had no faith at all in an open-air treatment for sheep, their mainstay. Did they coddle their flocks because they were over-anxious about them? This may have had something to do with the practice of keeping sheep under cover for eight months in the year. Ewes and wethers were so valuable to a farmer that anxiety on their account was inevitable. But there were other reasons also. Between November and May there was no forage out of doors for sheep and cattle; much of the land now known to us was still covered with wood; and so many fields had to be used for cereal crops that it was difficult at all times to find pasturage enough for the large flocks of sheep, not to speak of the cattle and horses. That the inactive life under cover was bad for animals may be judged by the tiny size of the sheep; there were many different breeds, and

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SIZE OF SHEEP

all were diminutively little, while their fleece was thin and light.

The wool sheared to-day from a good average sheep may be estimated roughly as follows: Welsh and Mountain, 3 lb.; South Downs, 4 lb.; Leicesters, 7 lb.; and Lincolns, 9 lb. In mediæval England the figures were very different, but the South Downs were low in the scale of averages. "The wool was coarse and full of hair," says Thorold Rogers. "I say this because I have seen cloth manufactured from fourteenth-century wool, in which the quality of the raw material is very discernible, though from the use made of it the cloth was almost certainly the best procurable. The fleece, too, was light, an average from many entries which I have made giving 1 lb. 7½ oz. to the fleece. . . . Hence the animal must have been small, and I think I may certainly say that a wether in good condition weighed a good deal less than forty pounds."

Is it not odd that England should have owed her prosperity to sheep no bigger than Mary's lamb in the nursery rhymes? To-day, so my butcher tells me, a mutton carcass ready for sale weighs from seventy to eighty pounds. There was thus abundant room for improvement in the early breeds, and efforts were made to increase their size, as may be learnt from the high price of rams; but the hardships of winter stunted the growth of all farm animals in mediæval England; and to this we must add the weakening effect of a crowded life under cover during three-quarters of the year. Real improvement began in the eighteenth century, when

OLD ENGLAND

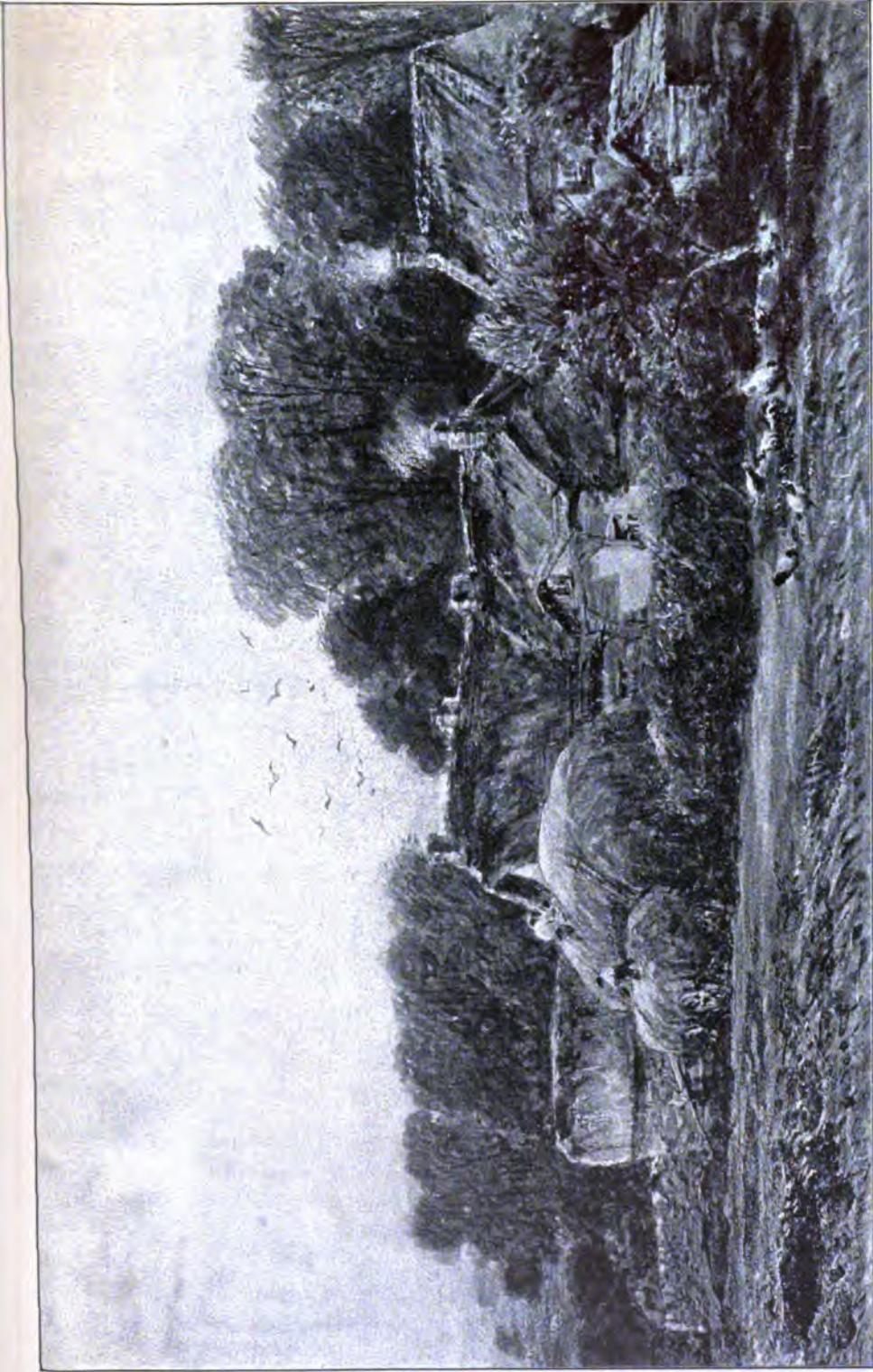
the wool trade was no longer an undisputed monopoly; but I find that the larger sheep were not liked at first, because they were more expensive, and also because Englishmen of the old times were staunch in their love for steady prices. They resented nothing more than a scale of barometric costs, that went up and down with changes of weather and season.

The earliest great successes in sheep-breeding were won in Leicestershire, where a yeoman of real genius, Robert Bakewell, of Dishley, after many experiments, astonished the country by the huge size of his sheep and cattle. These animals were in keeping with Dean Swift's imaginary kingdom, Brobdingnag, whose inhabitants were about "as tall as an ordinary spire steeple." Thus, for example, a ram three years old had the following measurements: Girth, 5 ft. 10 in.; height, 2 ft. 5 in.; and breadth over the shoulders, 1 ft. 11½ in. A ewe weighed 177½ lb. This animal belonged to Bakewell's New Leicester breed, for which very high prices were paid at auction in 1793, ranging from sixteen to sixty-two guineas for one good specimen. Bakewell (1726-95) was simple in all his methods. "Like will produce its like" was his favourite saying. He gave up the ancient custom of keeping sheep under cover, and trained his flocks to be hardy.

As the mediæval fleece was so light in weight, and as the English wool trade was very large and immensely important, the number of sheep in England must have been vast—greater, I think,

PLATE LXXIX
A SHEEP FARM AT NEWTOWN LINFORD

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
DIVISION OF THE PHYSICAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY
5708 SOUTH WOODLAND AVENUE
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60637



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SHEEP "TRUSTS"

than the population. It is estimated that the population could not have been more than the acres employed as wheat-growing land, because an acre in those days gave one quarter of wheat, just enough to supply one person with a year's bread. The wheat lands were in all about 2,500,000 acres, so the population was nothing to boast about. To get at the number of sheep is impossible, but some remarkable and suggestive figures were given by an Act of Parliament in 1533, at a time when there existed a widespread discontent in rural England, owing in part to an encroachment on common pastures, and in part to a forcible extinction of rights over common lands. Wealthy speculators were not only forming sheep "trusts"; they enclosed commons for this purpose, and turned arable land into pasture, throwing many peasants and small farmers out of work. It was the beginning of a bad time, a time pregnant with change and crisis. The State tried to stave off the inevitable, and clutched at the usual effects of a gambling "trust" system. Prices for sheep and wool became excessive, and there was imminent danger that the small tenant farmers would be gobbled up by the big adventurers. In this emergency the State took action not without haste and panic, framing the Act of 1533. Here it is stated that some persons kept as many as 24,000 sheep, while others had from 20,000 to 5000; and the Act decreed that hereafter no one should keep more than 2000, each hundred to be reckoned as five score only, not as a long hundred of six score; and any breach of

OLD ENGLAND

the Act would be followed by a penalty of 3*s.* 4*d.* on every head above the legal number, to be recovered by any informer, who would receive half the fine, the other moiety going to His Impecunious Majesty Henry VIII., the author of so much mischief.

For Henry struck many ruinous blows at the prosperity of English agriculture. The policy which he favoured unsettled the markets; and then came three tremendous deeds that affected the tenure and the value of farms throughout the country. They were the suppression of the monasteries in 1536, the debasement of the currency in 1543, and the destruction of the guilds, with the confiscation of their property, which shattered into pieces the ancient machinery of self-help.

Yet the people did not at first realise and understand the mischief done by Henry VIII. Somehow they loved him—a fact which does ample justice to their imagination. But the evil that men do lives after them, and Edward VI. in his short reign saw many agrarian troubles that Henry produced, at least in great measure. The enclosure of the common lands, which Somerset tried in vain to stop, was a thing apart; but it contributed to the other grievances that led in the east to Ket's rebellion, and the famous scene under the Oak of Reformation, on Moushold Hill, near Norwich, where the detested landlords were summoned to answer for their misdeeds. Warwick fell upon Ket, the tanner, and slew 3000 of his 20,000 men, while Ket and ten other leaders were hanged. It is

RACK-RENTING

usually the wrong persons who reap the whirlwind sown by others.

Farmers had every reason to fight for their just rights. Church property had passed into new hands, and the new owners set the example of rack-renting—that is, they raised the rent when tenants improved their hired lands at their own risk and cost. This evil became so notorious that Queen Elizabeth had to listen to complaints about it when she paid a visit of pleasure to Cowdray Park, Sussex, in August 1591. The Angler in his speech by the lake then said: “Landlordes put such sweete baits on the rackt rents that as good it were to be a perch in a pike’s belly, as a tenant in their farmes.”

But the main point is that English husbandry never renewed its youth, never quite returned to its former prosperity. The Golden Age had passed, not to come back again. Other sources of wealth would prosper, mines of many sorts, and factories and new trades; but the old nursing mother, the soil, the farm land, was to become a hard and weakened stepmother to any child that remained loyal to her fields. England’s great days in farming were coeval with the reign of the sheepfolds and shepherds.

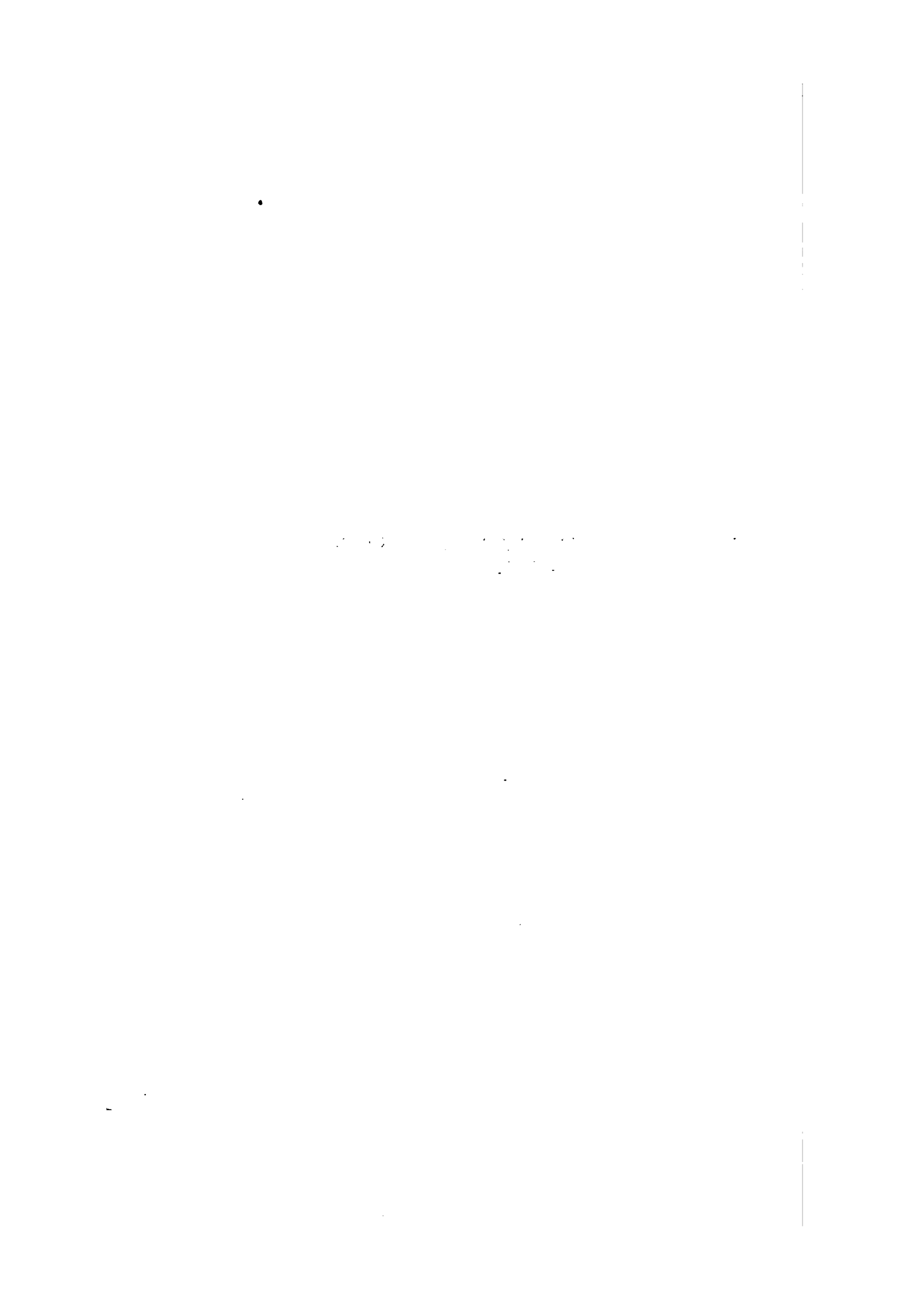
That is the truth which history bids us remember. All the cottages in this book are epitaphs, monuments that record a better time in the pursuits of agriculture; and they in their turn were contemporary with other old homes built in a still more prosperous epoch. By this means we may pass

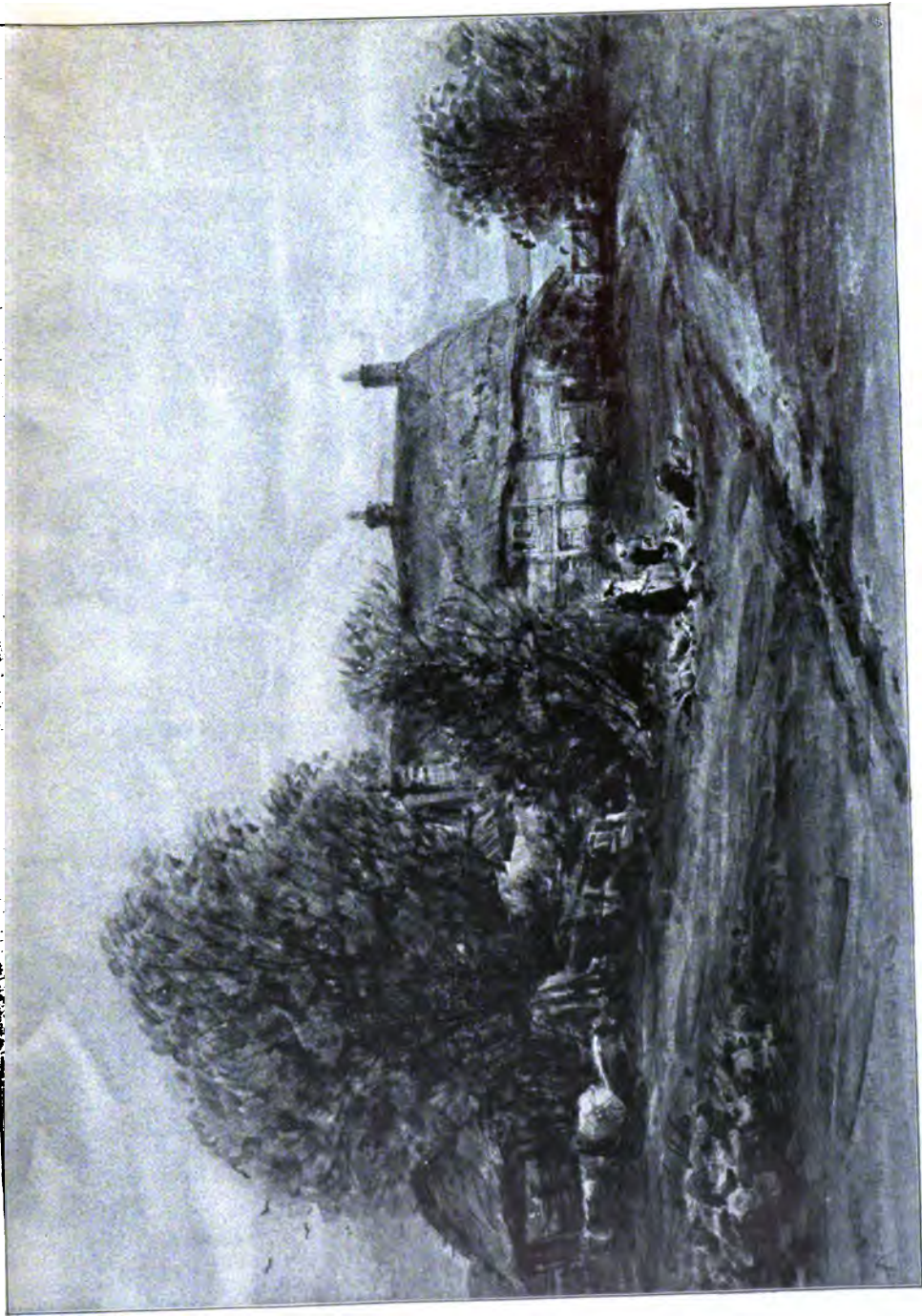
OLD ENGLAND

from the Middle Ages to our time, and watch the earnings of farm labourers grow less and less in their relation to the purchasing value of money. A little time ago, for instance, while walking over an estate in Sussex, I asked my companion what the farm workers got, and was told half a crown a day. That is a high average wage at the present time, though little enough to support a man and his wife and children. The wages of agricultural labour were much better in mediæval England. Thorold Rogers puts the matter in a practical way that is easy to be remembered. "I reckoned," says he, "when estimating the position of the mediæval labourer by the side of his descendants in the eighteenth century, that the former received for the labour of threshing rather more than one-eighteenth of the wheat he threshed, rather more than a twenty-second part of barley, and rather less than a fourteenth part of oats, taking the rate of wages and the price of grain as the factors in the calculation. [In the eighteenth century the peasant got one twenty-fourth part of wheat and barley, and a one-and-twentieth part of the oats he threshed." Hence "the labourer in the time of Henry III. was paid better than he was in the first year of George III."; and his position from 1760 to the present day has certainly not improved. Instead of becoming better, it has grown worse and worse. The Dark Ages settled down on English farming when the supposed Era of Light made its way from theoretical gamblers in political economy into practical statecraft, turning the whole nation into

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PLATE LXXX
SHEPHERD'S COTTAGE AT NORMANTON-
ON-SOAR





1911
1912
1913

FREE TRADE

an experimental trader whose home markets were free to all foreign adventurers, while foreign markets were as strongly fortified in self-defence as mediæval guilds and castles. We felt sure that we could be quite new and modern in trade and commerce, even although our rivals remained mediæval in their industrial tactics. So, after getting rid of our moats and drawbridges and barricades, we put aside our body-armour, and invited all the world to come and tilt against us in our own fields; and we were certain of our wisdom because our visitors could not make armour for themselves, and had thus to send us their raw materials, which brought for a while a great deal of wealth to our superior workmen and manufacturers. It did not occur to us that our trade secrets would be taken, and that others besides ourselves would make and invent machines, train thousands of expert artizans, and establish behind their fortified markets great industries modelled on our own English pioneer-ship. I said this twenty years ago, and was laughed at. To-day, happily, a great many electors see quite clearly that when most countries steadily follow the protective methods of the mediæval guilds, no nation alone can afford to open all her home markets scot-free to rivals of every kind and condition.

For a good many years now we have done most of our farming at second hand and away from England, playing the part of financial colonists on alien lands; but electors have begun to see at last that this madness without method is a

OLD ENGLAND

form of racial suicide, because a strenuous country should renew her strength through her own lungs, through her own fields and farms, and this she cannot do when they are atrophied by unfair and baneful conditions. No nation can prosper for many generations on the stress and strain inseparable from the war of competition in vast cities and in huge black trading districts. As well might we suppose that a great athlete could live and thrive on a ten-mile race repeated once a day from the age of fifteen to that of sixty.

Modern town-work is hard athleticism, making too many calls on the heart and nerves, so the lungs of the nation must be safeguarded and protected; history proves beyond all doubt that when farming declines in any country a race begins to lose breathing power. For a while it may succeed on its overtaxed nervous system, but decay goes on, waste without repair, a decline inevitable and fatal. From Old England to Aged England, and thence to Outworn England, are but steps in that decline; and if we neglect the physicians of our race, the farmers and farm labourers, the good Mother Earth and her servants, Old England will degenerate into an incurable consumptive, perhaps well fed on foreign meats and foods, and retaining to the end some of that chronic hopefulness for which all consumptive patients are noted among their friends and neighbours.

Altogether the reign of the sheepfolds and shepherds has much to teach us in the history of Old England, the chief fact of all being that

TO-DAY

prosperous farms are essential to a nation's stamina and physical well-being. When Shakespeare described England as

**This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,
This other Eden, demi-paradise ;
This fortress, built by nature for herself,
Against infection, and the hand of war ;
This happy breed of men, this little world ;
This land of such dear souls, this dear dear land,**

he spoke of a country which had grown rich and strong and free on agriculture ; but he saw dangers also in the nation's character, and put warnings into his eulogy. Had there been Cobdens in his day, or a lunacy of Free Trade accompanied by the importation of alien outcasts, he could not have written anything better than the following lines :

**He tires betimes, that spurs too fast betimes ;
With eager feeding food doth choke the feeder ;
Light vanity, insatiate cormorant,
Consuming means, soon preys upon itself. .**



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