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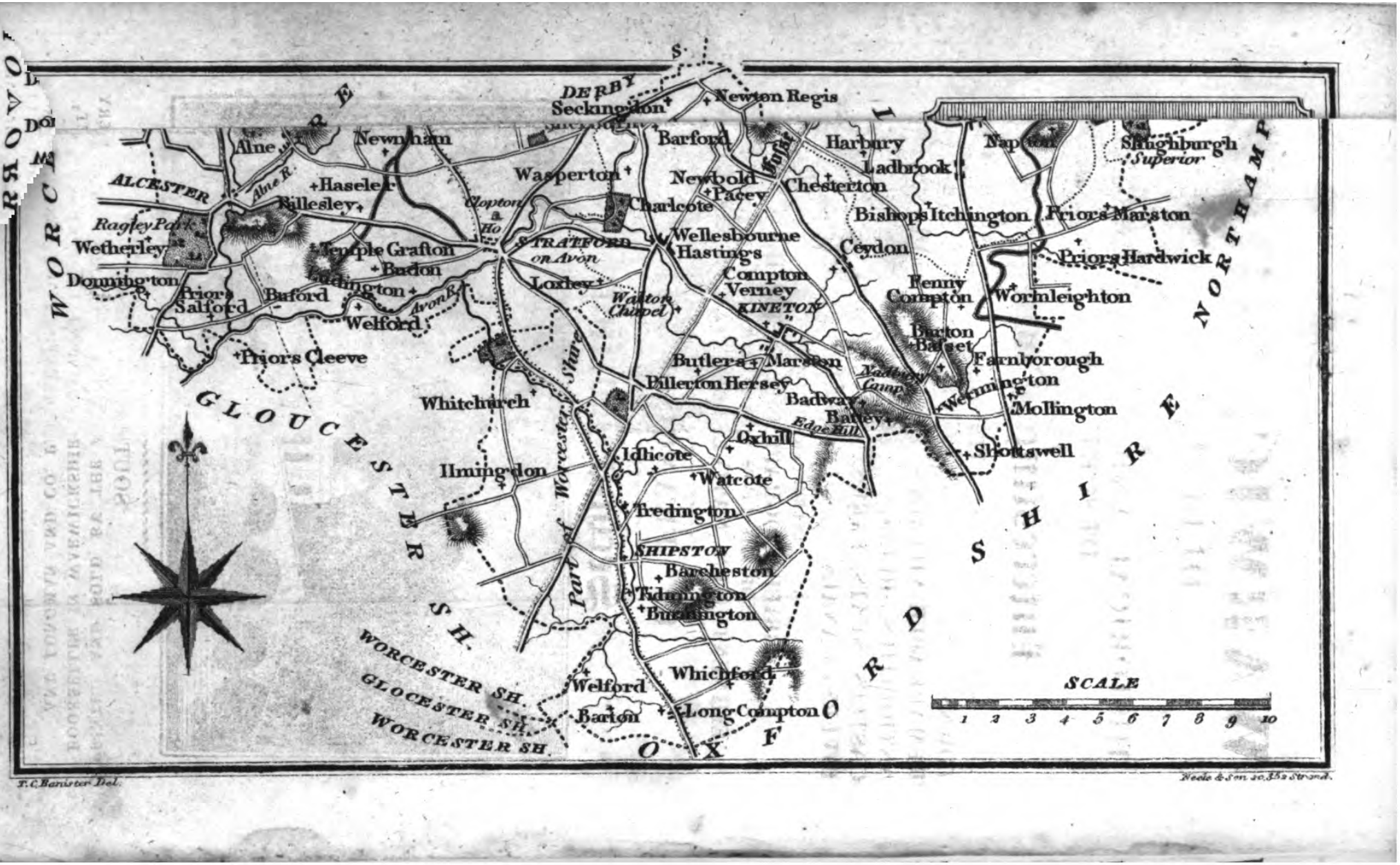

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WARWICKSHIRE
DELINEATED;

BEING A CONCISE

HISTORICAL AND TOPOGRAPHICAL DESCRIPTION

OF THAT

Interesting County;

ITS

TOWNS,
REMARKABLE VILLAGES,
ANTIQUITIES, RUINS,
CASTLES, SEATS, PARKS,
RIVERS, CANALS,
MINERAL SPRINGS,
NATURAL CURIOSITIES,
POPULATION,
MANUFACTURES,
MARKETS, FAIRS, &c. &c.

INTERSPERSED WITH

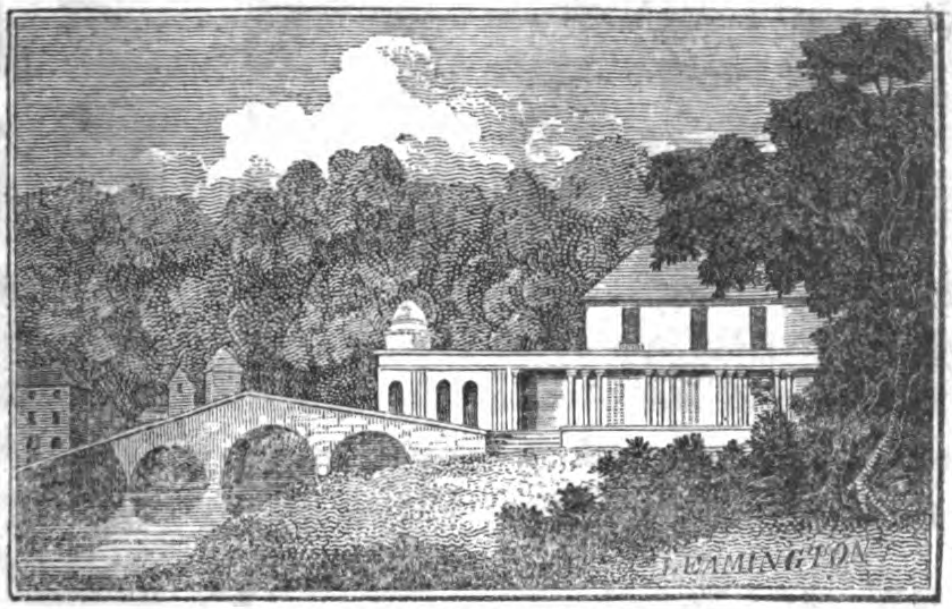
BRIEF BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

OF THE LIVES AND ACTIONS OF

EMINENT MEN NATIVES OF WARWICKSHIRE.

BY FRANCIS SMITH.

Second Edition.



SOUTHAM:

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PREFACE
TO THE SECOND EDITION.

The rapidity which marked the sale of the former edition of this small work proves its utility; and has far exceeded the most sanguine expectations of its compiler, upwards of FOUR HUNDRED AND FIFTY COPIES *having been sold in the last twelve months. The present edition contains every information of the former, and has also inserted in it some observations that edition had not;—the account of Leamington is entirely new arranged, and every public alteration which has taken place at that fashionable place of resort, is noticed.*

The few copies remaining unsold have all been through the compiler's hands, and the additional information is inserted in them.

The favourable reception which the former edition met with is highly flattering to a young historian, and he feels himself extremely happy in the opportunity the present edition affords him of acknowleding the same,—and of returning sincere thanks to those Gentlemen who furnished him with original information,—he also continues to solicit their friendly aid, as a third edition will be published immediately, such shall be required by the Public; and he pledges himself that every possible information shall be procured by him for that purpose.

GENERAL
ACCOUNT OF WARWICKSHIRE.

WARWICKSHIRE is an inland county, bounded by Staffordshire and part of Derbyshire on the north; by Leicestershire on the north-east; by Northamptonshire on the east; by Worcestershire on the west; by Oxfordshire on the south-east; and by Gloucestershire on the south-west.

The extent of this pleasant, healthy, and highly interesting county, from north to south, is about fifty miles; and its greatest breadth, from east to west, is about thirty-six miles. It contains nine hundred and eighty-four square statute miles, and Mr. Wedge, in his View of the Agriculture of this county, estimates the whole at six hundred and eighteen thousand acres; of which, about 154,530 are constantly under a successive round of tillage or grass seeds. The remaining 463,470 acres he supposes to be thus distributed:--of gardens, about 4,000 acres; of meadows, about 82,000 acres; of pasture and feeding land, about 150,000 acres; of woods, canals, rivers, &c. about 50,000 acres; of open field land, about 57,000

acres; and of waste lands and roads, about 120,470 acres. Since the above calculation was made, many acts of enclosure have been obtained, and at present very little land remains uncultivated.

Warwickshire was anciently divided into two parts, known by the names of the *Feldon* and *Woodland*, divided from each other by the river Avon; the Feldon, a fine fertile country on the south side, and the Woodland on the north side of the river. The division termed the Woodland was almost an entire forest, and is mentioned by Drayton to have been the largest in Britain; however, by the great consumption of wood in the iron works, &c. it is almost entirely cleared and cultivated, but in some parts it still retains a trait of its former wild character, and a large tract of land continues to be called by the forest name of *Arden*.

As the rude and uncivilized aborigines of this island left no record of their transactions, it is impossible to give any information respecting this county prior to the arrival of the Romans, when it was inhabited by the Cornavii and the Wiccii. In the reign of Constantine the great, when Britain was subdivided by the Romans, the greater part of Warwickshire was included in that division called *Britannia Secunda*.

The ROMAN STATIONS and REMAINS in this county are as follow:---Birmingham, according to Richard of Cirencester, was the Roman station

Bremenium; and some writers suppose Warwick to have been the Præsidium of the Romans. At High Cross, (so called from a cross that formerly stood there, the place of which is now occupied by a pillar,) situated upon the intersection of the two Roman roads, called the Watling-Street and the Fosse, Mr. Camden places the Benonæ of Antoninus. About a mile and a half north-east of Clifton, where the Watling-Street enters this county, are the remains of the Roman station Tripontium. The village of Mancester occupies part of the scite of the Roman station Manduessedum; and at Oldbury, in the same parish, are the remains of a Roman castramentation, supposed to have been the summer camp to Manduessedum. At Chesterton, six miles from Warwick, is a Roman castramentation, of square form; and at Wibtoft, in the parish of Monk's Kirby, there stood formerly, according to tradition, a Roman city called Cleychester.

Three of the great ROMAN ROADS cross this county, the Watling-Street, the Ikenild-Street, and the Fosse-Way. The *Watling-Street* is thought by some antiquaries to have been made by the Britons, crossing the Island from the county of the Guetheli, who were the remains of the old Celtic inhabitants, to the Kentish coast; it passed through many Roman towns, and is raised and paved, so that it appears, after the Romans had conquered Britain, they made their roads as best suited their own interest

and convenience, making the most they could of the British ways. This road divides Warwickshire from Leicestershire on the north-east, and passes from High Cross to Atherstone, from whence it proceeds through Shropshire towards Ireland. The *Ikenild-Street* is also thought to have been made by the Britons, as in many parts of its progress it divides itself into several branches, but all nearly parallel to its original course; and as it does not appear to have ever been raised or paved, this certainly favours the conjecture. Its name is British, and is derived from the Iceni, the ancient inhabitants of the eastern counties of England. The Ikenild-Street enters Warwickshire at Bidford, and passes through Alcester to Birmingham, from whence it proceeds to Sutton Coldfield, in the vicinity of which place it leaves this county; here this famous road may be seen in a state almost as perfect as it was in the time of the Romans. The *Fosse-Way* extends in a long straight line from High Cross, on the borders of Leicestershire, to Cirencester in Gloucestershire, intersecting Warwickshire from north-east to south-west, and in many parts of its course is in a very perfect state. Camden supposes this road was ditched on each side, and took its name from that circumstance. There is also a small road called the *Ridgeway*, on the western side of this county, but the traces of it are very faint.

When the Saxons had overrun England, and divided it into several flourishing kingdoms, War-

wickshire formed part of the kingdom of *Mercia*,* and it appears that the Mercian Kings had palaces at Tamworth, Kingsbury, and Offchurch. Welcombe Hills and Seckingdon, in this county, are distinguished; the former as being the scene of a sanguinary contest between the Britons and Saxons; and at the latter, Ethelwald, King of the Mercians, in a battle with Cuthred, King of the West Saxons, lost his life by the treachery of one of his own officers.

Warwickshire did not escape the ravages of the Danes, when they invaded this kingdom; Warwick and Tamworth, among other places, being destroyed by them.

William the conqueror, after he had secured himself on the throne, caused a survey to be taken of the lands in this kingdom, and inserted in a book called Doomsday Book, begun in 1081 and completed in 1086; Warwickshire at that time was divided into ten hundreds. The tyrannical William was exceedingly cruel to the native English, and deprived many persons of their lands in this county to enrich his Normans; of this we have an instance in Turchill, Vicecomes of Warwick, who after fortifying War-

* The kingdom of Mercia, the finest and most considerable of all the divisions of the heptarchy, was in length one hundred and sixty miles, and in breadth about a hundred miles. It contained the counties of Bedford, Buckingham, Chester, Derby, Gloucester, Hereford, Huntingdon, Leicester, Lincoln, Northampton, Nottingham, Oxford, Rutland, Salop, Stafford, Warwick, Worcester, and part of Hertford.

wick castle, according to the King's command, was deprived of it, and it was given with a vast tract of land to Henry de Newburgh.

Warwickshire had a considerable share in the commotions that took place in England during the reign of Henry the third. The ambitious Simon Montfort, Earl of Leicester, who possessed Kenilworth castle, garrisoned it, and appointed Sir John Giffard governor; and from this fortress the garrison occasionally issued out, ravaging the country and destroying the houses of the inhabitants. The Earl of Warwick having taken part with Henry the third, Sir John Giffard and his troops made a successful expedition against Warwick castle, which they surprised and took the Earl and his Countess prisoners. The garrison appears to have been very formidable to the surrounding country, for on their receiving intelligence that John de Verdon, the possessor of Brandon castle, in this county, had a commission from Henry the third to raise troops in Worcestershire for that monarch, they marched against Brandon castle, and after a successful assault demolished it. About twelve months after the battle of Lewes, in which the Earl of Leicester and the Barons gained a victory, and immediately preceding the battle of Evesham, which Prince Edward and his party gained; Simon Montfort, son of the Earl of Leicester, who with his army was proceeding from London to join his father in Wales, was surprised at Kenilworth by

Prince Edward, who had made a sudden and forced march there, when he routed and dispersed Montfort's troops, and made the Earl of Oxford and many other distinguished personages prisoners; but Montfort, who was in the castle, where he had passed the night before, made his escape, as Edward did not judge it expedient at that time, to attack a fortress of such strength. In this skirmish the Prince took "prodigious booty," among which were fifteen standards. These, afterwards, on his march to Evesham, proved of the greatest utility, for he caused them to be carried in front of his army, and by this means they served as a decoy; for the Earl of Leicester imagined when he saw them that his son was approaching to join him, and he hailed it as the means of ensuing victory and triumph; he, however, soon found out his error, and is said to have exclaimed, "May God then receive our souls; our bodies are in the power of our enemies!" The battle of Evesham was fought on the 4th of August, 1265, when Prince Edward gained a complete victory over the Earl of Leicester who was slain, and rescued his father King Henry the third, who had been taken prisoner at the battle of Lewes. After the battle of Evesham, Simon Montfort beforementioned, son of the Earl of Leicester, with many of his adherents that had escaped the carnage, took refuge in Kenilworth castle, from whence Montfort privately withdrew to France, leaving Henry de Hastings governor of the

castle. Henry the third soon approached with a large army, and though the garrison made an obstinate resistance, famine at length compelled them to surrender, after a siege of six months.

In the sanguinary conflict that took place between the white and red roses, Richard Neville, emphatically styled *the stout Earl of Warwick*, with a great number of the inhabitants of this county, espoused the cause of the house of York. In the early part of this contest Beaudesert castle, near Henley-in-Arden, at that time unoccupied, was dismantled. The city of Coventry took the part of Henry the sixth, and that monarch held a parliament there, when attainders were passed against the leaders of the Yorkists; but these proceedings were afterwards reversed. In 1470 the Earl of Warwick, having become disgusted with King Edward, sided with the Lancastrians, and took possession of Coventry, and Edward the fourth was refused admittance into that city, and obliged to retire to Warwick.

In the reign of Richard the third, when the Earl of Richmond landed at Milford Haven to support his claim to the crown, the sheriff of Warwickshire levied men to assist King Richard, but it does not appear that they fought at the battle of Bosworth Field.

In the reign of James the first, as a part of the horrid gun-powder plot, Sir Everard Digby, Knight, and his followers were to assemble in the

neighbourhood of Dunchurch, in this county, under pretence of hunting, and seize the Princess Elizabeth, (a child,) at that time at Combe Abbey, and proclaim her Queen. This is curiously recorded in Ayscough's collection, in the British Museum, which informs us, that "The old bloody hunting-match of Dunchurch being ordered and appointed by Sir Everard Digby, Knight, for surprising the Princess Elizabeth, whose residence was near that place, Maister Catesby writ unto Maister Humphry Lyttleton, entreating him to meet him at Dunchurch." The gunpowder plot, however, being discovered in London, Catesby and Percy fled from thence to this county, where they met Sir Everard, who had already taken up arms, being confident of success; but they now found themselves surrounded by enemies, and perceiving their own inferiority of numbers, they made a stand at a house, which they determined to defend to the last gasp; but some gunpowder, which they had laid to dry before the fire, blowing up, so much wounded some of the conspirators, that the remainder opened the door and sallied out against the multitude that surrounded the house: here they fought desperately till the greatest part of them, with Catesby and Percy, were slain. The survivors were tried, and many of them executed.

In the reign of the unfortunate Charles the first, when this nation was plunged in all the horrors of civil war, Warwickshire had its share of confusion

and bloodshed. The major part of the inhabitants, with Lord Brooke of Warwick castle, at their head, were hostile to the interest of Charles, and that monarch found himself repulsed in his attempt to get possession of Coventry. At Edge Hill, in this county, was fought the first *pitched battle* between the King's forces and those of the Parliament, in which about five thousand men are stated to have been killed. In the early part of the war, Warwick castle was besieged by the Earl of Northampton, but Lord Brooke advancing from London to its relief, a skirmish ensued between the two parties near Southam, in which the Earl of Northampton was defeated and obliged to retire. In 1643 a skirmish took place at Birmingham between Prince Rupert and some Parliamentarian troops, in which the Prince was victorious, and set fire to town, in revenge for the resistance the inhabitants had made.

There were formerly twenty-five CASTLES in Warwickshire; viz. Astley, Aston Cantlow, Baginton, Beaudesert, Brandon, Brinklow, Caludon, Cheylesmore, Coleshill, two at Fillongley, Fulbroke, Hampton-in-Arden, Hartshill, Kenilworth, Kineton, Maxtoke, Milkote, Olton, Oversley, Rokeby, Studley, Tamworth, and Warwick. Of these, the most celebrated in history are Warwick and Kenilworth, fortresses of immense strength, that have resisted the attacks of an enemy with success. Warwick castle still continues a magnificent baronial

residence, and defies the assaults of time; but Kenilworth is now a large and extensive picturesque heap of ruins. Maxtoke castle still remains in a tolerable perfect state; Tamworth is also in good preservation; there are likewise very considerable remains of Astley castle, but the others have been long since rased to the ground; of a few, the scite is scarcely known, and the only relics of the remainder are their earth works, or fragments of wall.

Previous to the dissolution, there were twenty-eight RELIGIOUS HOUSES in Warwickshire; viz. Three for benedictines, Alcester, Aucote, and Coventry; three for cistercians, Combe, Merevale, and Stoneleigh; one for carthusians, the charter house, near Coventry; four for canons regular of St. Augustine, Erdburie, Kenilworth, Maxtoke, and Studley; four alien priories, Monk's Kirby, Warmington, Wolston, and Wootton Wawen; four nunneries, Bretford, Pinley, Polesworth, and Wroxall; one of the order of Fonterrault, which included both monks and nuns in its establishment, at Nuneaton; one of the order of the Holy Trinity for redemption of captives, at Thelesford; one for Augustine friars, at Atherstone; one for grey friars and one for white friars, at Coventry; one for regular canons of the Holy Sepulchre, the priory at Warwick; one for black friars, at Warwick; and two preceptories of templars, Balsall and Warwick. Previous to the conquest, there was also a monastery at Stratford,

Four of the before-mentioned religious houses,---Combe, Stoneleigh, the white friars at Coventry, and the priory at Warwick,---have been converted into mansions; of some of the others, scarce a stone remains to mark the ground on which they stood; but there are vestiges remaining of those at Atherstone, Balsall, the charter house near Coventry, the grey friars at Coventry, Kenilworth, Maxtoke, Merevale, Nuneaton, Pinley, Polesworth, and Wroxall.

Warwickshire is at present divided into four HUNDREDS, Barlichway, Hemlingford, Kineton, and Knightlow; besides the county and city of Coventry. It contains one city, Coventry; two boroughs, Warwick and Stratford-on-Avon; twelve other market towns, Atherstone, Alcester, Birmingham, Coleshill, Henley-in-Arden, Kenilworth, Kineton, Leamington Spa, Nuneaton, Rugby, Southam, and Sutton Coldfield; one hundred and ninety-three parishes; and seven hundred and eighty villages. It is included in the midland circuit; in the province of Canterbury, and dioceses of Lichfield and Coventry, and Worcester; it returns seven members to parliament, viz.---two for Coventry, two for Warwick, one for Tamworth (half of that place being in Warwickshire), and two for the county.

In 1801 the POPULATION of Warwickshire was estimated at 215,000; but in 1811, when the last returns were made to parliament, it contained, including the county and city of Coventry, nearly 229,000 persons.

The principal RIVERS of Warwickshire, are the Avon, the Leam, and the Tame. Of these the *Avon* stand conspicuous as the chief; it rises at Naseby, in Northamptonshire, and enters this county at Bensford Bridge, whence taking a meandering course and receiving several small streams, it flows to the ancient borough which gives name to the county.

"Here '*soft Avona*' gliding thro' the plains,
Enriches *Warwick's* grand, antique domains;
'Neath *Cæsar's turret's* deep and awful shade,
Nature (with art) has form'd a grand *cascade*,
O'er which the foaming waters quickly bound,
As hast'ning thro' the vale to *classic ground*."

BISSET.

The domain of Warwick castle derives great beauty from the Avon, which flows beneath the high rock on which the castle is situated, and its meanderings have a delightful effect. From Warwick, the Avon continues its winding course through a pleasant and exceedingly rich fertile country, to the town of Stratford, the birth-place of our immortal Shakespeare.

"Hail! gentle Avon, for thy bard renown'd!
Ilyssus, with the Muses' temple crown'd,
Nor that fair stream along whose sparkling tide
On Isis banks the Muses still reside;
Nor that Hydaspes, with its golden springs,
Nor Deva's flood, where wizards dip their wings,
So oft recorded in sweet verses flow,
As thou, Old Avon, silent, deep, and slow!"

Warwick Castle, a Poem.

At Stratford the Avon becomes navigable for vessels of considerable burden, and after leaving those classic walls it proceeds to Bidford, a short distance from which place it leaves this county; and, after passing the towns of Evesham and Pershore, finally blends with the waters of the Severn at Tewkesbury.

The *Leam* rises on the eastern edge of this county, and after numerous sinuosities and passing several villages, adding great fertility to the meads, it approaches Leamington Spa, where it assumes the appearance of a considerable stream, having received a number of petty rivulets; from hence, flowing swiftly forward, it joins the Avon near Warwick.

The *Tame* rises in Worcestershire, and enters this county near Birmingham; from thence it flows in a curvilinear direction to Tamworth, where it receives the Anker, and passes into Staffordshire, having received in its course several other streams, particularly one which rises near Coventry and blends with it near Coleshill.

The SMALLER STREAMS in this county, which, though of less importance, greatly contribute to the fertilization of the lands, are the Alne, the Anker, the Arrow, the Blythe, the Cole, the Dove, the Itchen, the Rea, the Swift, the Sow, and the Stour.

Great numbers of various kinds of fish abound in all the above rivers and streams. The Avon has been particularised by some authors as a river producing

"salmon equal to any in England;" Dr. Nash, however, in his History of Worcestershire, observes "It may perhaps surprise persons unacquainted with the sagacity and instinct of fish to tell them, that though the river Avon at its mouth, near Tewkesbury exactly resembles the Severn, yet no salmon, shad, lamprey, or lampern, ever mistake their course, or go up the Avon." Several later historians have recorded from Dr. Nash this very surprising circumstance; and one of them makes an addition to it by observing that this "indubitable fact must be accounted for by supposing that the particles of food floating in each river, and the nature of their bottoms, must differ considerably." Surely Dr. Nash, nor either of those who copied after him, did not examine the river Avon at Tewkesbury, or they would have discovered that it is not the sagacity and instinct of the salmon, shad, &c. or the particles of food or nature of the bottom of the Avon that makes them continue in the Severn; but it is the various *stoppages* at Tewkesbury, as the water-fall, lock, and flood-gates, that makes it impossible for them to enter the Avon, or else we have no doubt they would be found, according to the first statement, "equal to any in England!"

Warwickshire derives great advantage from its numerous NAVIGABLE CANALS, which intersect it in various directions, and enables the inhabitants to transport their productions to all parts of the world.

There is a canal from the Wednesbury and Dudley coal and lime works to Birmingham, thence to Fazeley and Fradley heath, to join the Staffordshire grand trunk; from this canal, cuts branch off to Atherstone, Nuneaton, Bedworth, and Coventry. There is another canal from Birmingham to Worcester, with branches to Dudley and Stratford-upon-Avon; another from Birmingham to Warwick; and another unites the Birmingham and Warwick with the Oxford canal.

There are several MINERAL SPRINGS in this county; saline springs at Leamington and Southam, a chalybeate spring at King's Newnham, at Ilmington, and one on the side of the Coleshill road about a mile from Birmingham; but they are almost entirely neglected, with the exception of Leamington, which has risen from a small village to a very fashionable and celebrated watering place.

The MINERALS and FOSSILS in this county, are coal, limestone, freestone, ironstone, blue flagstone, marl, and blue clay.

The SOIL varies extremely in different parts of the county, and sometimes remarkable varieties occur in a very small district; however the greater part is well calculated for agricultural purposes, and few counties have less bad or sterile land in proportion to the good. The farms are generally of a moderate size, and Mr. Wedge was of opinion that one hundred and fifty acres were about the average when

he wrote his View of the Agriculture of this county; there are, however, many very opulent farmers and graziers in Warwickshire, who occupy large tracts of land. The long-horned cattle are the principal that are bred in this county; the sheep are generally of a large sort, and are not inferior to the breed of any in England. Wild animals of most of the British kinds are found, as foxes, badgers, otters, &c. &c. and in common with other counties, it abounds with land birds of most sorts, some of the water kind, and in many parts of it game is plentiful.

Besides the antiquities in Warwickshire we have mentioned, there are the barrows of Knightlow hill, and Cloudesley bush; the remains of a tumulus on the Watling-Street at Church Over; artificial mounts and intrenchments at Seckingdon, and Welcombe hills; the figure of a horse cut on the side of the hill at Tysoe; a camp on Edge Hill, called Nadbury Camp, supposed to be the work of the Romans; an encampment on the Fosse-Way at Brinklow; and the remains of a Roman encampment at Wolston.

The MANUFACTURES of Warwickshire are numerous and various. Birmingham is the principal commercial town in the county, and its extensive manufactures of hardware, buttons, buckles, toys, muskets, swords, and military accoutrements, are unequalled throughout the world. Coventry is noted for its manufacture of ribbons, which extends to the adjacent country as far as Nuneaton, &c.; and a

great number of watches are likewise manufactured at Coventry. At Warwick there are manufactories of worsted and cotton, and in 1810 a manufactory of lace, made by machinery, was introduced at that place. At Birmingham, Kenilworth, and Nuneaton, there are manufactories of every description of horn and ivory combs. At Atherstone a large quantity of coarse hats are made; and at Alcester needles are manufactured, from which upwards of five hundred persons find employment at that place.

Having now given a sketch of the General History of Warwickshire, we shall proceed to give an account of the town of Warwick, and places in its vicinity that will not come under notice in our journies; previous to which, however, we present our readers with the following *original* POETICAL EFFUSION *on Warwickshire and its beauties*, from the pen of Mr. Edwin Lees, who kindly presented it to the author of the present work, for his use on this occasion.

WARWICKSHIRE, thy fields infuse
Ardour to the youthful muse.
Wand'ring by silver *Avon's* stream,
Or by its tributary *Leam*,
Rolling its current swift along,
Fair *Leamington* demands the song;
Where pleas'd *Hygeia* at the wells
In youth immortal ever dwells,

And holds her court in princely state,
Cheer'd by the favour of the great;
For vain the aid of India's wealth,
Without *thy* smile enchanting health!
Then Goddess, suffer me to lave
The chrystal water from thy cave;—
Now WARWICKSHIRE thy beauties rise
In bright succession to my eyes.
Thy various towns call forth the lay,
Thy castles lone, thy ruins grey,
Thy noble seats, baronial halls,
And *Coventry* thy once fam'd walls,
That have to kings access deny'd,
And all their regal pow'r defy'd;
A city too, renown'd in fame
For fair Godiva's honour'd name,
Who *scorn'd the ornaments of dress,*
To gain her people's happiness.
Warwick whose tow'rs majestic frown,
And overlook the subject town;
Its steel-clad Earls in glory shine,
For arms renown'd,—illustrious line!
Next to where nature's sweetest child,
" Warbled his native wood-notes wild,"
To *Stratford,* where soft Avon flows,
And where in undisturb'd repose
The ashes of our Shakespeare sleep,
The muse would simply point—and weep.
Now Fancy stretch thy rapid wing,
Though half the scenes 'twere vain to sing,

And only serve the ear to tire,
Devoid of true poetic fire.
See *Birmingham* 'midst noise and smoke,
The anvils ringing at each stroke,
Calls on all Europe to surpass
Its works of iron, steel, and brass;
With population running o'er
Its name resounds from shore to shore.
But rapidly and short I name
The towns that best attention claim.
Tamworth, the royal Mercian seat,
Sutton,* thy half forsaken street,
Where *Vesey*, (peaceful rest his shade,)
In former times reviv'd thy trade;
With *Atherstone*, where Tudor's son
By secret counsel England won; †
Nuneaton, where female beauty
Knelt to dull monastic duty;
Kenilworth whose ruins hoar,
Resound with wassail mirth no more;
Rugby, thy grammar school renown'd,
And Roman *Alcester's* antique ground;
With other towns of minor note
'Twere needless to repeat by rote.
Now tuneful nine my pen inspire,
Give me to touch the living lyre,

* Sutton Coldfield.

† Alluding to the secret conference the Earl of Richmond held with the two Stanleys, at Atherstone, the night previous to the memorable battle of Bosworth Field.

In ecstacy to wake each string,
And soar on Rapture's fairy wing;
For see a native band appear,
Thy pride, thy glory, WARWICKSHIRE!
Foremost in rank illustrious shine
The poet, scholar, and divine;
See magic *Shakespeare* lead the way,
He rules with undivided sway;
To him thy votaries bend the knee,
Divine, enraptur'd Poesy!
What though himself he forms a host,
Yet other native bards we boast;—
Beside our Shakespeare's valued lines,
Old *Drayton's* antiquated rhymes;
Jago, to whose elegiac song
Softness and tenderness belong,
With *Somerville* the train among.
There *Rous*, with genealogic scrolls,
And hoary *Dugdale*—kindred souls;
Fam'd Garter King! thy name shall live
While antique lore can pleasures give.
Nor these the only names that raise
Attention, and call forth our praise:
Prelates, Divines, conspicuous stand,
St. Wulstan leads the pious band;
With *Macklesfield*, to crown whose head,
A scarlet hat when life was fled,
Arrived:—but 'neath his sable pall
Unconscious slept the Cardinal!

The *Stratfords*, there three mitres see
With lustre crown one family!
Vesey, a papist from his heart,
Bird, who a temporising part
Performed like Bray:* for why thought he
Should I lose Chester's goodly see?
Compton, who plac'd the regal gem,
Britain's imperial diadem,
On William † and his righteous cause,
Favour'd by freedom and the laws.
These, and a host of names beside,
The muse could easy bring to view,
Wanley and *Cave*, our honest pride,
With *Overbury*, *Carte*, and *Grew*:
Suffice it thus in sounding verse,
Thy various beauties to rehearse.
Now to thy rich luxuriant hills,
O WARWICKSHIRE! thy murmuring rills,
Thy flow'ry vales, thy meadows green,
With *Avon* gliding slow between,
A long farewell to scenes like these—
Scenes form'd the pensive mind to ease;
Where contemplation pleas'd would dwell,
And silent leave his mossy cell.

* Vicar of Bray.

† King William the third, who was crowned by Compton, Bishop of London. The other names referred to above, are all mentioned in the course of Mr. Smith's journies.

Warwick, and places in its vicinity that will not come under notice in our journies.

WARWICK, the capital of the county, and one of the best county towns in the kingdom, is delightfully situated on a rocky ascent, on the banks of the river Avon; distant 91 miles from London, 20 from Birmingham, 10 from Coventry, and 8 from Stratford-upon-Avon.

The foundation of this town, like that of many others, is wrapt in intricate obscurity; it has been treated of by several celebrated antiquaries, but they vary in opinion, and at present it is not satisfactorily ascertained to what people it owes its origin.

Rous, the first Warwickshire historian, attributes its foundation to Gutheline or Kimberline, a British King, cotemporary with the birth of our Saviour, and asserts that it had then the name of *Caer-guthleon*. He also states, that the town being almost ruined by the ravages of the Picts and Scots, it continued in a dilapidated condition till the time of the famous Prince Caractacus, who rebuilt it, and erected a church in the market place, to the honour of John the Baptist. When the valour of this renowned Prince was obliged to bend before the superior force of the Roman arms, Ostorious Scapula, (as we are informed by Tacitus, a Roman historian) erected several fortifications on the rivers Avon and

Severn; and Warwick is mentioned by Camden and others to have been one of them, known by the name of *Præsidium*.

In the ferocious wars that immediately succeeded the departure of the Romans from Britain, Rous informs us that this town was again laid in ruins by the northern barbarians, and rebuilt by Constantine, a British King, on whose death it again suffered from the ravages of war, and was rebuilt by another British King, named Gwdyr. Some time after this, when the Saxons ravaged the kingdom, it again fell a prey to rapine and violence, and was rebuilt by Warremund, King of Mercia, who called it after his own name Warrewyk.

Dugdale and several other antiquaries, follow Rous's account of the foundation of Warwick, and agree that it was a Roman station; others, however, doubt whether it was a Roman station, and as no Roman antiquities have been found here, they conclude Rous's account to be fabulous, and assign its origin to the Saxons.

As the history of Warwick being founded by the Britons rests entirely upon Rous, and then probably upon tradition or conjecture, it is not given here as authentic; but all historians agree that the town was built, if not originally founded, in the time of the Saxons. It continued in a very prosperous state during the Saxon heptarchy, till it was destroyed by the Danes; however, it speedily revived and flourished again under the patronage of Ethelfleda,

daughter of King Alfred, who about the year 915, laid the foundation of the castle, by erecting a strong fortification here called the don-jon, upon an artificial hill of earth, raised near the river Avon, and which is still to be seen on the west side of the castle.

Warwick again suffered from the Danes, under Canute, in 1016, but soon recovered from this fresh disaster, and in Doomsday Book it is called a borough, and is stated to contain two hundred and sixty-one houses; of which one hundred and thirty were possessed by the King, one hundred and twelve by certain Barons, and nineteen by so many Burgesses, who enjoyed them with *soc* and *sac*, (that is with the entire jurisdiction,) and all customs as they had in the time of Edward the confessor.

At the conquest, Turchill, a valiant and powerful man, was Vicecomes or Earl of Warwick, and he was directed by William the conqueror, who considered this place of great importance, to fortify and enlarge the castle, which, till that time consisted of little more than the keep or dungeon. Turchill was also ordered to fortify the town of Warwick, and in consequence, it was surrounded by strong walls and a ditch. These walls were afterwards repaired and the paving of the town begun in the reign of Edward the first; to defray the expense of which, tolls were levied on all commodities brought to this place for sale; but these enactions continuing for many years injured the town, as merchants and tradesmen took

their goods to dispose of them at other places. Some remains of these walls were visible in the time of Leland, reign of Henry the eighth, who thus mentions them in his Itinerary. "The towne of Warwick has been right strongly ditched and walled, having the compass of a good mile within its walles. The dike is most manifestly perceived from the castle to the west gate; and there is the great crest of earth that the walles stood on. Part of the walles neere the gates are yet seene. The east and west gates still remaine. The north gate is downe. The strength of the bridge, by the castle, stood for the south gate." He also thus describes the appearance of the town. "The towne stands on a main rokky hill, rising from east to west. The beauty and glory of it is in two streets, whereof the high-street goes from east to west, having a right goodly cross in the middle of it; and the other crossith the middle of it, making a quadrivium, and goeth from north to south." At present the east and west gateways are standing, and are in a good state of preservation; the cross has been taken down many years, but the spot where it stood still bears its name.

In the reign of Henry the third, a numerous meeting of the nobility and others, was intended to have been held at Warwick, for the purpose of exercising themselves in martial tournaments and other feats of arms; but this meeting from an apprehension of danger to the public peace, was forbidden by the

King. A second meeting, in the fifty-seventh year of the same reign, for similar purposes was proposed, but again prohibited.

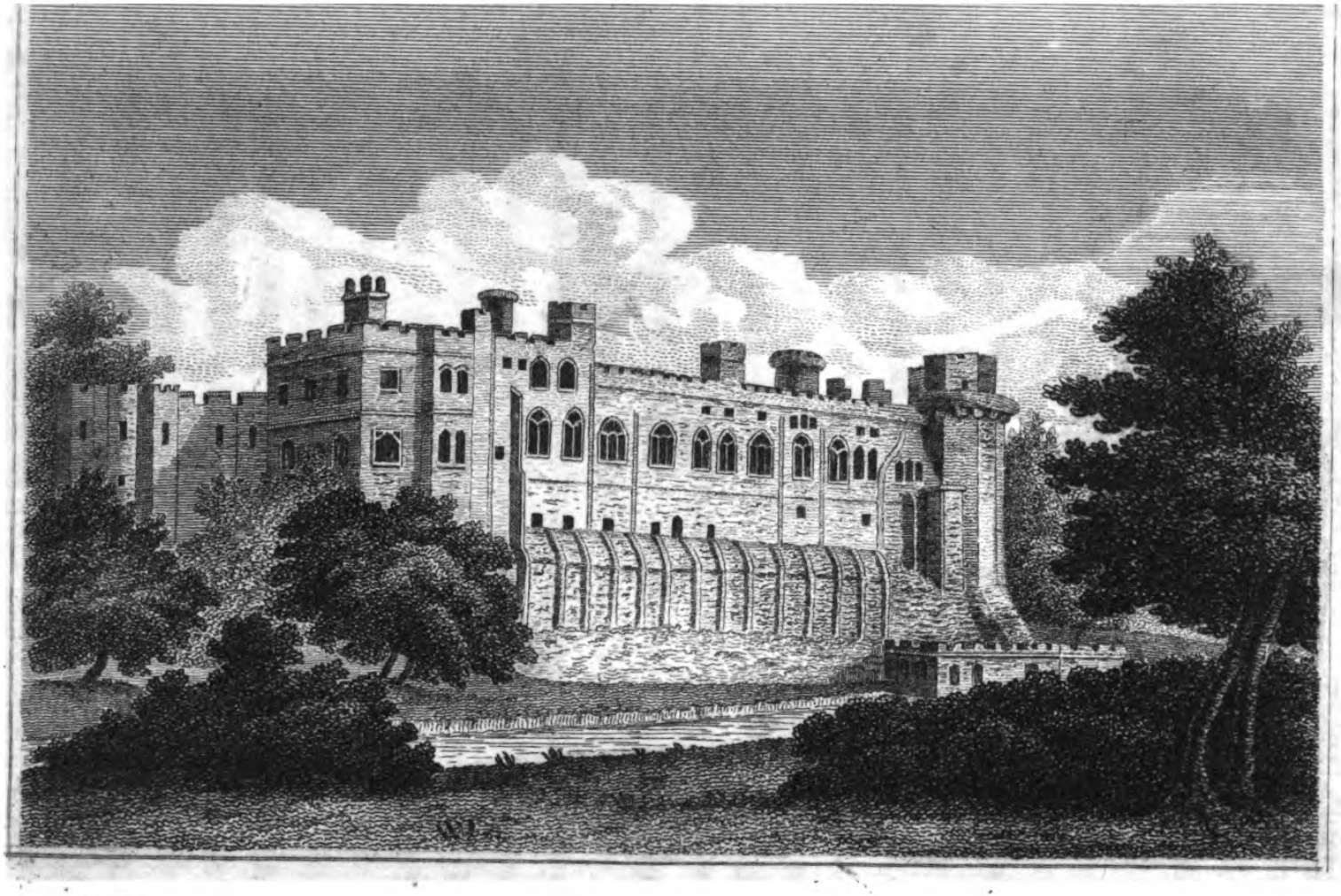
Warwick, in the reign of Edward the first, by the patronage of its Earls, was in a very flourishing condition, and in the seventh year of that reign, a market was held there on Wednesdays, and an annual fair for sixteen days. In this year a tournament was held at Warwick, according to Rous, with great splendour, when a numerous concourse of natives and foreigners of distinction assembled from all parts, and the whole party banquetted at a *round table*, an ancient custom, intended to avoid all painful distinctions of precedency. William de Beauchamp, in the eighteenth of this reign, obtained a charter for another annual fair to be held at Warwick, to last fifteen days.

In 1533, (the first of Philip and Mary) Warwick was incorporated, under the name of bailiff and burgesses, and a new charter was granted in the reign of James the first; but the latest charter under which the corporation now act, was granted in the reign of William and Mary, by which the government of the town is vested in a mayor, recorder, twelve aldermen, and twelve principal burgesses, with a town clerk.

In September, 1694, a most terrible calamity befel Warwick, the greatest part of it being consumed by fire. The flames were unfortunately

communicated to St. Mary's church, and the body and tower were destroyed; but the chancel, chapter house, and the Beauchamp chapel were saved from destruction. The whole of the damage sustained by this conflagation, was estimated at above £120,000. Subscriptions for the relief of the unfortunate sufferers, were immediately set on foot in the neighbouring towns, and £11,000 were collected by briefs, to which Queen Anne added £1,000 as a royal gift. The calamity of this fire, however dreadful at the time, has proved beneficial in its result; as Warwick has risen more beautiful, like a Phœnix from its ashes, being rebuilt, by act of parliament, in a more uniform and magnificent manner.

The principal streets retain the same direction they did in the time of Leland, but the one he calls high-street now bears two names; one half of it only is called high-street, the other half jury-street. Most of the streets are spacious and handsome, and many of the houses being of freestone present a fine appearance. The cellars are cut out of the solid freestone rock on which the town is situated, and in many of them are stone reservoirs for holding water, which is conveyed by pipes from a conduit half a mile distant. The town is exceedingly well paved, and being situated on an eminence every shower washes away obstructions, and the streets uniformily present a very clean appearance.



WARWICK CASTLE.

Previous to our describing the public buildings, or giving further information concerning the *town* of Warwick, we shall give an account of its *castle*, as it forms the most noble ornament to the town, and is frequently to the antiquary and traveller the first and principal object of research.

WARWICK CASTLE, the boast and pride of this county, and one of the most magnificent baronial residences remaining in England, is beautifully situated upon a rock which rises forty feet perpendicularly above the surface of the Avon, though on the north side it is level with the town.

The first foundation of this celebrated structure was laid, as before-mentioned, by Ethelfleda, the heroic daughter of King Alfred, who, about the year 915, raised an artificial mount of earth, on which was erected a strong tower or keep, called the don-jon. Nothing, however, remains visible of this Saxon building except the mound of earth, now called the mount, under which, it is supposed, the lower apartments of the don-jon still remain entire.

At the Norman conquest, William the conqueror employed Turchill, Vicecomes or Earl of Warwick, to enlarge the fortifications of the castle; after which, being distrustful of all the powerful native English, he would not trust him with the custody of it, but committed it to Henry de Newburgh, a Norman, whom he created Earl of Warwick.

In the reign of King Stephen, a garrison was placed in the castle by that monarch; but Gundred, Countess of Warwick, siding with the opponents of Stephen, drove out the garrison, and delivered up the castle to the young Duke of Normandy, who, on Stephen's death, ascended the throne, by the title of Henry the second. When the eldest son of Henry the second revolted against him, the castle was garrisoned by the King, at which time Bertram de Verdon was sheriff of the county, and the amount of his charges in the nineteenth of that reign for the supplies of provisions, wages of the soldiers, and repairs of the castle, as recorded by Dugdale, (which we mention merely to shew the cost of provisions in those days) is as follows:—For twenty quarters of bread corn, £6 13 4; twenty quarters of malt, £1 0 0; fifty oxen, salted down, £5 0 0; ninety cheeses, £1 10 0; salt, £1 0 0; soldiers' wages, £30 10 8; repairs, £5 7 9.

Some idea of the strength and importance of this castle, in the reign of Henry the third, may be formed from that monarch's commanding the Archbishop of York and William de Cantalupe to require good security of Margery, sister and heiress of Thomas de Newburgh, sixth Earl of Warwick, that she would not marry any person in whom he could not impose the most implicit confidence.

In 1265, Sir John Giffard, governor of Kenilworth castle, at the head of the rebels, who were then in

possession of that fortress, surprised William Mauduit, Earl of Warwick, who had taken part with Henry the third, and carried him and his Countess prisoners to Kenilworth, and they were obliged to pay 1900 marks for their release. At that time great part of the walls were thrown down, that the possession of the castle might be of no advantage to the royal party. On the death of Earl Mauduit, in 1267, who left no issue, the possession of the castle was transferred to the Beauchamp family by the marriage of Isabel, his sister, to William de Beauchamp, baron of Elmley, in Worcestershire.

During the minority of the first Thomas de Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, the castle was committed to the custody of different governors; but, at the age of seventeen, as a mark of great favour, he was admitted to the possession of all his honours and estates. This Earl rebuilt the walls of the castle which had continued in a ruinous state since their demolition by the rebels, in the reign of Henry the third; he also erected strong gates, and fortified the gate-ways with embattled towers. The second Thomas de Beauchamp, son of the above-mentioned Earl, in 1394 erected the grand tower called *Guy's tower*, the walls of which are ten feet in thickness. This Earl having afterwards incurred the hatred of King Richard the third, was condemned to die on a false charge of treason; but his sentence was commuted into banishment, and the custody of Warwick

castle was given to John de Clinton; however, on the deposition of the tyrannical Richard, he was restored to his honours and estates.

On the death of Henry, Duke of Warwick, in 1445, the castle became the property of the famous Richard Neville, Earl of Salisbury, who assumed the title of Earl of Warwick, in right of his wife, daughter of Richard de Beauchamp and sister to Henry, Duke of Warwick. From this valorous Earl, who was slain at the battle of Barnet, in 1471, it passed to George, Duke of Clarence, (brother of Edward the fourth) who had married one of his daughters: this nobleman chose Warwick castle for his principal residence, and by him it was much enlarged and beautified. On his death (being drowned, according to some historians, in a butt of malmsey wine,) in 1477, his son Edward succeeded to the title of Earl of Warwick, but his lands were seized by the crown; and this unfortunate youth was kept a close prisoner in the tower of London, by Henry the seventh, till on a frivolous pretence he was attainted, tried, and beheaded, in 1499.

Warwick castle from that period till the first year of the reign of Edward the sixth, continued in the possession of the crown, when it was granted, with many lands that had belonged to the Earls of Warwick, to John Dudley, who was created Earl of Warwick, and afterwards Duke of Northumberland. On the attainder of this nobleman, in 1553, they

again reverted to the crown; however, Queen Elizabeth, in 1557, granted them to Ambrose Dudley his son, whom she created Earl of Warwick; but he dying without issue, they again became the property of the crown, where they continued till James the first, in the second year of his reign, granted the castle to Sir Fulke Greville, Knight, afterwards advanced to the dignity of a Baron, by the title of Lord Brooke. The castle at that time was in a very ruinous and dilapidated condition, the strongest part of it being used as a common gaol for the county; but this nobleman bestowed in repairing and beautifying it, more than £20,000, and made it his principal seat.

During the civil war, in the reign of Charles the first, the castle was garrisoned by its owner, Robert Greville, Lord Brooke, a strenuous partizan on the side of the parliament. It was besieged by the Earl of Northampton in 1642, who surprised the artillery sent from London for its defence; but after a fortnight's continuance the siege was raised, in consequence of the approach of Lord Brooke, at the head of a powerful force. On some parts of the castle, there are still to be seen the hooks upon which wool-sacks were suspended to protect it from injury.

In the reign of Charles the second, the castle was much improved by Robert, Lord Brooke, who greatly embellished the state apartments. Francis Greville, grandson of this nobleman, was in 1746,

created Earl Brooke of Warwick castle, and in 1759 he was advanced, by George the second, to the further dignity of Earl of Warwick. He was succeeded in his title and estates in 1733, by George the late Earl, who very much beautified and adorned the castle, gardens, park, and grounds; and his eldest son, Henry, is the present possessor, and makes the castle his general residence.

The principal entrance to this magnificent castle, is by an embattled gateway, on the entrance of Warwick from Leamington, and from hence the grand approach is excavated out of the solid rock, which is clothed on each side with ivy and a profusion of fine shrubs. This road is so judiciously contrived as for upwards of a hundred yards to shut out a view of the castle, when, at a sudden turn, its lofty machiolated towers burst upon the astonished eye in all their magnificence. Cæsar's tower, which appears on the left, rising to the height of one hundred and forty-seven feet, is of greater antiquity than any other part of the building; and though not a Roman erection, as from its name some have supposed, was built about the time of the Norman conquest. On the right appears Guy's tower, rising to the height of one hundred and twenty-eight feet, which, being situated on a more elevated part of the rock, overlooks Cæsar's tower. This strong majestic tower, the walls of which are ten feet in thickness, was built in 1394, by Thomas Beauchamp, Earl of

Warwick; from its summit, which strangers are permitted to ascend, the eye takes in with delight a most beautiful and extensive prospect. These towers are connected together by a strong embattled wall, in the centre of which is the great arch gate-way leading into the inner court: this was originally the principal entrance to the castle. Before this front is a deep moat, now destitute of water and dark with shrubs and trees, over which an arch is thrown where was formerly the draw bridge.

Passing into the inner court, in front appears the lofty artificial mount before-mentioned, covered with trees and shrubs; it is crowned with a watch tower, and the light breaking through the iron grating of its gateway, has a pleasing effect. On the left appears the noble castellated mansion, the residence of the family, a grand and extensive pile, whose antique appearance is not injured by the modern improvements it has received.

The entrance to the interior is by a Gothic porch, with a flight of stone steps, which leads to the hall, a fine room, hung with numerous relics of antiquity. From the windows of this room beautiful prospects are obtained over the park, and a wide extent of rich varied country; while immediately beneath the windows the waters of the Avon fall in a pleasing cascade.

As the limits of this publication will not permit us to describe every apartment and elegant decoration

with which this noble castle abounds, we shall, therefore, only mention the most remarkable objects of curiosity.

The state apartments are adorned with a fine collection of paintings by the most eminent masters, exquisite marble busts, antique vases, with other relics of antiquity; and the furniture is of the most costly and superb description. The state bedchamber is hung with tapestry made at Brussels in 1604; the bed and furniture are of crimson velvet, embroidered with green and yellow silk,—these once belonged to Queen Anne, and were presented to the late Earl of Warwick by his present majesty. The armoury passage contains a variety of weapons of different nations, with some fine natural curiosities. The British armoury contains the finest collection of old English armour in the kingdom; among a variety of others, there is a complete suit of fluted armour, brought from Germany; and the doublet Lord Brooke was killed in at Lichfield is here preserved, on which drops of blood may be still faintly traced. The chapel is fitted up in a neat and elegant manner; it contains an organ, and its Gothic windows are filled with finely-executed painted glass.

In one of the rooms attached to Cæsar's tower, called the porter's lodge, are preserved the arms and accoutrements of the celebrated Guy, Earl of Warwick. This redoubted hero lived in the time of the Saxons, and, according to tradition, destroyed a

terrible boar, near Windsor; a monstrous cow, called the dun cow of Dunsmore-heath; and a dragon, in Northumberland. In the reign of King Athelstan, the Danes having invaded England, and victory attending their arms, they compelled the King to shut himself up in Winchester, where they closely besieged him. At this crisis, Earl Guy returned from the Holy Land, where he had been on a pilgrimage, and it having been agreed between Athelstan and the Danes, that a single combat should decide the fate of the kingdom, Guy offered himself as the English champion. The Danes chose for their hero, Colbrand, a mighty African giant, and a terrible single combat ensued, in which Guy proved victorious, and the Danes in consequence quitted the kingdom. After this exploit, he retired to Guy's Cliff, near Warwick, where he hewed himself a cave out of the solid rock, and spent the remainder of his days in penitence and prayer. Through this romantic tale there is a gleam of truth, and there can be no doubt but such a personage as Guy once existed, though his exploits have been much magnified. The curiosities shewn at Warwick castle said to have belonged to Guy, consist of his sword, shield, breastplate, helmet, walking staff, and tilting pole; what is shewn for his horse armour, however, is evidently of a much later date than the above accoutrements. They also shew his porridge-pot, which is of bell-metal, containing about one hundred and two gallons;

his flesh fork; his ladies stirrup of iron; pretended rib of the dun cow and pith of her horns; one joint of the spine, the tusk, and a shoulder blade of the wild boar. Besides these, there are at the castle many other curious weapons, not connected with the history of Guy.

The gardens attached to Warwick castle are spacious, and laid out with great elegance; beautifully adorned with wood, and enriched by charming prospects: we may justly exclaim with the poet

"Say can the pencil's warmest touch convey
The varied richness of the glowing scene?
How sweetly doth the chrystal stream pour forth
Its dimpled current o'er the velvet coats
Of mossy pebbles:—soft the tinkling sound
Where 'twixt the rocks it bubbles—whilst the dove
Coos to her distant mate the plaintive strain."

Fronting a fine lawn in the gardens, gently sloping to the Avon, is a large handsome Gothic greenhouse, containing a fine collection of exotics. In the centre of this building is the celebrated antique vase, purchased in Italy by Sir William Hamilton, and re-purchased of him by the late Earl of Warwick. It is of white marble, six feet in height, and twenty-one feet in circumference; and is capable of containing one hundred and sixty-three gallons: the rich sculptured ornaments on this curious relic of antiquity, are most beautifully executed, and it remains in a good state of preservation.

The park belonging to the castle is very extensive, and connected with the pleasure grounds and gardens by a magnificent stone bridge of one arch, which bestrides the calm waters of the Avon. The park is pleasingly interspersed with groups of trees, and adorned by a most beautiful lake, occupying one hundred and fifty acres, on which may be seen many curious varieties of the wild duck. In a group of elms, on the east side of the lake, is a herony, of which there are now so few in the kingdom.

We hope the foregoing account of Warwick castle, though necessarily much compressed, will be sufficient to give our readers an idea of its ancient and present state: we have now only to observe, that the Earl of Warwick kindly permits it to be shewn to strangers and parties, " and whatever magnificent ideas they may have formed of its grandeur, we make no doubt but they will be perfectly realized."

WARWICK, at present, has but two *Churches*, St. Mary's and St. Nicholas's; but formerly there were eight others beside these. One dedicated to All Saints, stood within the precincts of the castle; another to St. John the Baptist, situated in the market place; a third to St. James, over the west gate; a fourth to St. Peter, anciently stood near the cross, but was taken down and rebuilt, in the reign of Henry the sixth, over the east gate; a fifth to St. Sepulchre, stood where the priory now does; a sixth

to St. Helen, near the bridge end; a seventh to St. Michael, at the lower end of the saltisford; and an eighth to St. Laurence, at the lower end of the west-street.

St. Mary's Church.—The first foundation of a church at Warwick, dedicated to St. Mary, is very ancient, reaching beyond the records of history; but it is certain one existed before the Norman conquest, and was repaired and made collegiate in the reign of King Stephen, by Roger de Newburgh, the second Norman Earl of Warwick. It was rebuilt by Thomas Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, in 1394, during the reign of Edward the third; and, by an ecclesiastical decree in the same reign, service was discontinued at the other churches, and the inhabitants of Warwick were ordered to repair to this church and St. Nicholas's only. At the dissolution, St. Mary's church, (then collegiate,) with that of St. Nicholas was, by letters patent, granted to the inhabitants of Warwick and their successors. In 1694, the body and tower of this church were destroyed by the great fire before-mentioned, and the modern part, as it now appears, was rebuilt and finished in 1704. The design of the modern part is attributed to Sir Christopher Wren; but it is not finished to correspond with the ancient parts. The church on the whole, however, presents a very august and stately appearance, and the beautiful and elegant tower, which rises to the height of one hundred and thirty feet, has a fine effect.

The dimensions of this structure are as follow:

	Feet.	In.
Length of the church, including the choir .	186	1
Breadth of the nave and side aisles . .	66	0
Length of the cross aisle	106	6
Height of the roof	42	6
Length of the choir	77	3
Breadth of ditto	27	4

The tower, situated at the west end of the church, contains ten bells and a set of chimes; it is built on four groined arches, and beneath is a passage for carriages, &c. A Latin inscription, on three sides of the tower, records the different repairs it has received, its destruction by the great fire in 1694, and its re-erection and completion, under the joyful auspices of Queen Anne, in the memorable year 1704.*

The principal entrance to the church is beneath the tower, and its interior presents a very beautiful appearance. There are commodious and extensive galleries, and the church, in the winter season, is warmed by four large stoves, placed at the extremities of the principal aisle, concealed in the shape of urns, standing on pedestals. Over the entrance to the middle aisle is a fine organ, which has been recently removed from the west end of the church. In the south transept was formerly a most superb

* In this year the famous victory of Blenheim was gained by the Duke of Marlborough.

monument, erected to the memory of Thomas Beauchamp, the second of that name Earl of Warwick, and Margaret his Countess, which was destroyed by the fire of 1694: all that now remains of this monument, is a brass plate, taken out of the ashes and fixed against the wall, on which are the effigies of the Earl and his Countess.

The entrance to the choir,—which was begun in 1370 by Thomas Beauchamp, the first of that name Earl of Warwick, and finished by his son in 1392,—is through handsome gates of iron, and on each side there are two ranges of stalls in four divisions. The roof is of stone, very elegant, enriched with the founder's arms, impaled with those of his wife, embosomed by seraphim; and the east window, which is very large, is filled with painted glass. There are four floors, ascending one step above another to the altar, which is a modern piece of workmanship and inconsistent with the Gothic structure in which it is placed. In the middle of the choir is a stately monument to the memory of Thomas Beauchamp, founder of the choir, and his Countess. It is a massive tomb of composition of plaster, with a marble cornice, on which are placed two white marble statues of the Earl and his Countess, in recumbent postures; and at the sides and ends of the tomb are thirty-six figures, male and female, alternately. There are, also, several other monuments in the choir worthy the notice of the inquisitive stranger. Under-

neath the whole floor of the choir is a vault, called the bone house, chiefly used as a burial place for the mayors and body corporate of the borough.

To the north of the choir are three distinct apartments, termed the lobby, the chapter-house, and the library or vestry room. The lobby is now used as an engine house: in it are two monuments to domestics of the Earls of Warwick. The centre apartment is of an octagonal form, and was anciently the chapter-house of the dean and canons; but in the reign of James the first, Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke, erected in it a stately monument of black and white marble, under which he is interred: the monument bears the following remarkable laconic inscription:—"FULKE GREVIL, SERVANT TO QUEEN ELIZABETH, COUNSELLOR TO KING JAMES, AND FRIEND TO SIR PHILIP SIDNEY." Over the tomb hang several helmets, pieces of armour, banners, &c. The vestry room was formerly the library belonging to the canons, and it still contains a collection of old books. Under the vestry was the friars' kitchen, now used as a mausoleum for the Warwick family.

On the south side of the church, and adjoining the choir, stands the stately and beautiful *Chapel of our Lady*, commonly called the *Beauchamp Chapel*, which was begun by the executors of Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, according to the directions of his will, in 1443, and finished in 1464,

at the expense of £2481 4 7½, including the monument of the founder, which sum at the present time is said to be equal to £40,000. The exterior of this chapel is a fine specimen of the decorated Gothic stile of architecture, and is in a good state of preservation. The entrance to the interior, which is fifty-eight feet long, twenty-five feet wide, and thirty-two feet high, is by a flight of twelve stone steps, through folding doors from the south transept of the church, and the beauty of the interior is not, perhaps, exceeded by any other Gothic structure in the kingdom. There are three floors of black and white marble, each ascending one step towards the altar, and the ceiling is most richly ornamented with armorial bearings of the Beauchamps, &c. On each side of the chapel are three windows of six compartments, in some of which there are fragments of painted glass; and the great eastern window, over the altar, is filled with beautifully painted glass, representing a great variety of figures, coats of arms, &c. The altar-piece is a fine modern basso-relievo, representing the Salutation, placed under a handsome Gothic canopy. On each side of the altar is a shrine, of very elegant workmanship, in which, according to Dugdale, were formerly two images of pure gold, each weighing twenty pounds. In the centre of the chapel is the magnificent marble tomb of its founder, Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, on which he is represented in brass gilt, as

large as life; and a great number of figures, standing in niches, are placed round the tomb—this is esteemed the most splendid monument in the kingdom, except that of Henry the seventh's in Westminster abbey. Over the tomb is a hearse of gilt brass hoops, to protect it from injury; and the inscription, which is in old English, whimsically interspersed with the bear and ragged staff, informs us, that he died in 1439, being at that time lieutenant-general and governor of France. This Earl was so renowned in his day for military prowess and other accomplishments, that Fuller in his "Worthies" observes, that in him the twelve labours of Hercules found a real performer. There are other splendid monuments in the Beauchamp chapel;—of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, the favourite of Queen Elizabeth, who died in 1588; of Ambrose Dudley, emphatically stiled *the good Earl of Warwick*, who died in 1589; and of Robert, the infant son of the Earl of Leicester. Also, fixed to the north wall of this chapel, there is a marble tablet to the memory of Lady Catherine, wife of Sir Thomas Lewison, and grand-daughter of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester. To the munificence of this lady we are indebted for the excellent preservation of this chapel and the monuments it contains. She gave, at the solicitation of Sir William Dugdale, fifty pounds, during her life-time, for the purpose of arresting them from destruction by time and dilapidation; and on

her death she bequeathed forty pounds per annum, to be paid out of the manor of Foxley, in Northamptonshire, for the purpose of keeping the chapel in repair and for the preservation of the monuments.

Behind the altar of the Beauchamp chapel is a small room, supposed by some to be the library built by the famous John Rous, whose authority is quoted in several parts of this work. On the north side of the chapel is the chantry, to which there is an ascent by four steps, and it is paved with red and black glazed tiles. To the north of the chantry is the confessional, the steps to which are almost worn through; at the east end of it is the confession seat, and near it is an oblique square hole, opening into the choir, through which, it is said, confession was made.

St. Nicholas's Church.—This is a modern structure, but it is supposed that a religious edifice occupied its scite before the Norman conquest; as, according to Rous, the chancel of the church in his time was more anciently the choir to a house of nuns, who occupied the ground on which it stood, and much of the adjacent land. This abbey, of which there are now no remains, was destroyed in 1016, by Canute the Dane, when he ravaged this country; it was, however, afterwards rebuilt, but in 1123 it was granted, under the name of the church of St. Nicholas, to the dean and canons of St. Mary's, by Roger, the second Norman Earl of Warwick. This

abbey is remarkable as being the place where Queen Emma, widow of Ethelred and Canute, and mother of Edward the confessor, was imprisoned, and the scene of her trial by the fiery ordeal. She, having been accused of unchaste familiarity with Alwyne, Bishop of Winchester, was sentenced by the King, her son, to pass the fiery ordeal, which was as follows:—Nine plough shares, heated red hot, were placed at unequal distances, which the accused must pass barefoot and blindfold, and if this was performed unhurt, the accused was judged innocent, and if otherwise, guilty. The Queen, with great fortitude, passed the ordeal unhurt, and was accordingly judged innocent, and permitted to retire to Winchester, where she ended her days.

When the church of St. Nicholas was granted to the dean and canons, two priests, with regular salaries, were appointed to do the religious duty, but in 1401, a vicarage was established. At the dissolution this church was granted to the inhabitants of Warwick and their successors. The present edifice is in the modern Gothic stile. The old tower was taken down in 1748, and the present one, from which issues a modest spire, was erected on its scite. The interior of the church presents a very neat appearance, and contains an organ; but there are no monuments particularly deserving notice.

In Warwick there are places of worship for the Presbytarians, Quakers, Independents, Methodists,

and Baptists; which, though inostentatious, are commodious buildings.

The Priory.—This structure was situated on the scite of an ancient church, dedicated to St. Helena, on the north side of the town, and was founded by Henry de Newburgh, the first Norman Earl of Warwick, and completed by his son in the reign of Henry the first. It was instituted for a society of canons regular of the order of St. Augustine, in imitation of one of the same order, in the church of the Holy Sepulchre, at Jerusalem; and is mentioned to have been the first house of that order founded in this kingdom. At the dissolution, in the reign of Henry the eighth, this, sharing the fate of other religious houses, was suppressed; and the structure, with the lands belonging to it, were seized by the crown, where they continued till 1547, when they were granted to Thomas Hawkins (usually called *Fisher*, from the circumstance of his father having been a fish-monger at Warwick) and his heirs, to be held in socage of the castle of Warwick, by the annual rent of £1 6 9.

The greater part of the priory was levelled with the ground by Mr. Hawkins, who erected on its scite a handsome mansion, finished in 1555, which he made his principal residence. To this house was given the name of *Hawkins's Nest*, and its situation, says Dugdale, in the midst of a grove of lofty elms, rendered that name not inappropriate. The priory

was sold by the son of Mr. Hawkins, and after various transmissions, was purchased by Henry Wise, Esq. of Brompton Park, Middlesex, whose grandson the Rev. Henry Wise, rector of Offchurch, in this county, is the present possessor.

The mansion, termed the priory, is large and handsome, forming three sides of a square, and the interior consists of nearly a hundred apartments. It is beautifully situated on an eminence, commanding fine views, and is surrounded by majestic groves, pleasant gardens, and a park consisting of near seventy acres, adorned by several ponds of water.

The Black Friars.—On the west side of the town, near what is now called friar lane, stood a religious house of friars preachers, commonly called black friars. These friars settled at Warwick towards the latter end of the reign of Henry the third, and their house was surrendered, by deed, 30th of Henry the eighth, and being mendicants, they had no pensions granted them. The house and all that belonged to it, were granted by Edward the sixth, to John, Duke of Northumberland and his heirs, and the house was soon afterwards demolished.

Leicester's Hospital.—This ancient structure is situated at the west end of high-street, and formerly belonged to two united gilds, both established in the sixth year of the reign of Richard the second, and was the hall where the fraternity met. These gilds being dissolved by Henry the eighth, this

building, according to Dugdale, was granted in the thirty-seventh of that monarch's reign, to Sir Nicholas le Strange, Knight, and his heirs; but it afterwards was acquired by Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, who, in the twenty-eighth of Elizabeth, made it an hospital for a master, and twelve impotent men, not having above five pounds per annum of their own, and such as had been maimed in the wars in the said Queen's service, her heirs and successors, especially under the conduct of the said Earl or his heirs, or had been tenants or servants to him and his heirs, and born in the counties of Warwick and Gloucester, or having their dwelling there for five years before; and in case there happened to be none such hurt in the wars, then other poor persons of Warwick, Kenilworth, and Stratford-upon-Avon, in this county, and of Wootton-under-Edge, and Erlingham, in Gloucestershire, to be recommended by the minister and churchwardens where they last had their abode: which twelve poor men are to wear dark blue cloth gowns, with the badge of a bear and ragged staff embroidered on the left sleeve, and not to go into the town without them.

The value of this bequest is now much increased, and its annual rental amounts to above two thousand pounds. The appointment of the master and brethren is vested in the heir general of the founder, who is at this time John Shelly Sydney, Esq. of Penshurst Place, Kent. In 1813, this gentleman made an ap-

plication to parliament, in consequence of which some important alterations have been made in the government of the hospital. It appears that the share of each of the brethren, after certain deductions, amounted to one hundred and thirty pounds per annum, while, at the same time, the salary of the master, by a clause in the act of endowment, was limited to fifty pounds; though, as the value of the estates at the foundation was two hundred pounds a year, it seems evident that it was the intention of the founder for the master to have a quarter of the yearly produce of the estates, whatever that might be. The act of parliament, therefore, provides for the lessening of the allowance to the brethren, and the gradual increase of the salary to the master till it amounts to four hundred pounds per annum. The present brethren are continued in the possession of their large income, but the annual allowance of each new member is limited to eighty pounds, and the surplus, which is about fifty pounds, is to be appropriated, one moiety to the increase of the master's salary, and the other for a fund for the support of additional members, which are in the whole to amount to twenty-two. The buildings of this hospital form a quadrangle; consisting of a house for the master, lodgings for the brethren, and a large kitchen for public use. There is also a spacious hall, in which the gilds formerly held their meetings; and in this room, as appears by an inscription on the wall, King

James the first was entertained by Fulke Greville, September 4, 1617. This hall, by the act of parliament, is now to be formed into apartments for the additional members. The present master of the hospital is the Rev. John Kendall, M. A.

Adjoining Leicester's hospital, and belonging to it, is the chapel of St. James, built on the west gateway of the town, which presents a very antique appearance. The chapel of St. James originally belonged to the gilds before-mentioned, and, after the dissolution, falling into the hands of the Earl of Leicester, it was assigned by him to its present use. Here the master and brethren of the hospital assemble every day for morning and evening prayers, except when there is service at St. Mary's church. The interior of this chapel is handsome, and over the altar is a good painting of the Ascension, by Millar.

St. John's Hospital.—This is an ancient Gothic structure, situated at the bottom of smith-street, facing the Coventry road. It was formerly an hospital, founded by William, Earl of Warwick, in the reign of Henry the second, for the entertainment and reception of strangers and travellers, also for persons who were poor and infirm. At present it is a private academy for young gentlemen.

Between St. John's hospital and the church of St. Nicholas, anciently stood a *House of the Templars*, founded and endowed by Roger, Earl of Warwick, in the reign of Henry the first. On the suppression

of this order, in the reign of Edward the second, all the lands passed to the knights hospitallers, and continued in their possession till the general dissolution, when they were granted to John Dudley, Earl of Warwick, and his heirs.

The College School.—This is a large ancient building, situated in the butts, and extends to St. Mary's church-yard. It is built in the form of a quadrangle, and was originally the residence of the dean and canons of St. Mary's church. At the dissolution it was converted by Henry the eighth into a free school, for the education of all the children of the town whose parents chose to avail themselves of the advantage; but, unfortunately, as the clause of endowment only prescribes the scholars to be taught the learned languages, they are not numerous. This school is conducted by a master and assistant teacher, and Mr. Fulke Weal, a native of Warwick, left by his will, two estates in trust for providing two exhibitioners, each at present of the annual value of seventy pounds, to be given to two young men, natives of this borough, towards defraying the expenses of their education at Oxford, for seven years.

The Eastern Gateway, situated at the extremity of jury-street, supports a building which was formerly a church, dedicated to St. Peter, erected in the reign of Henry the sixth. It is now converted into a charity school, termed the chapel school, for the gratuitously educating and clothing the poor children of the town.

In addition to the benevolent institutions we have already mentioned, there are various other charity schools, alms houses, and charitable foundations in Warwick; as the school of industry, the lying-in charity, Henry the eighth's charity, Sir Thomas White's charity, Oaken's alms houses, Iffeler's alms houses, Pickering's alms houses, west-gate alms houses, &c. &c. and the poor houses of St. Mary and St. Nicholas.

The Court House, or Town Hall, situated in jury-street, is a handsome edifice of stone, erected about the year 1730, at the expense of the corporation. They were, however, summoned to appear in the court of chancery, under the charge of misapplication of the public money in erecting this building, and were suspended from the exercise of all their power and privileges for the space of eight years. In this hall the sessions for the borough are held, and on the second floor there is a fine room, sixty feet in length, used for assemblies, &c. The front of this building is adorned with the royal arms, the arms of the borough of Warwick, and a handsome statue of justice.

The County Hall.—This is an extensive building, situated in sheep-street, with an elegant stone front, supported by pillars of the Corinthian order, erected about 1776, by a skilful architect named Hiorne, a native of Warwick. The noble room on the ground floor is ninety-four feet in length, and the courts of justice are placed in semicircular recesses on the

west side. The second story is occupied by the grand jury chamber, and a room for the occasional retirement of the petty juries. In this building the assizes and quarter sessions for the county are held, and public meetings on business relative to the county. The hall is occasionally converted into a ball room at the races.

Adjoining the north end of the county hall is the *County Gaol,* the stone front of which is in sheep-street, supported by massive pillars of the Doric order. This front is detached from the rest of the building, and forms public offices for the justices. The principal entrance to the prison itself, is from bridewell-lane; the interior consists of four principal divisions for the male and female felons, and the master and common debtors; the whole is kept very clean, and is exceedingly well regulated.

The County Bridewell is situated nearly opposite the entrance to the prison, in bridewell-lane, and is a large, handsome, modern structure. It is conducted in a very judicious manner, and the inmates are employed in manufacturing carpets, blankets, linsies, tammies, bed-rugs, &c.

The Market House is a substantial and handsome stone building. The lower part is appropriated to the use of the market people, and the rooms above are occupied as a depot for military stores. The market-place is spacious, and surrounded by many good houses.

Near the market house is a room used as a *Public Library*, which was first established in 1792. It is supported by annual subscription, and the number of subscribers are about a hundred. It contains a considerable collection of well chosen books, and its affairs are managed by seven persons chosen annually by ballot.

The Theatre is a small building situated near the market place. Its exterior is plain, but its interior is neatly fitted up, and well adapted for its intended purposes.

The New Bridge.—This very elegant stone structure over the waters of the Avon, consists of one grand semicircular arch. It was built about forty years ago, when an act of parliament was obtained for removing the road to a greater distance from the castle. The expense of its erection amounted to four thousand pounds, one thousand of which was contributed by the corporation, and three thousand by the Earl of Warwick.

The Iron Bridge.—This is a light and pleasing erection, and consists of one arch thrown over the road cut out of the solid rock, leading from the market-place to the saltsford. It was presented to the inhabitants by Charles Mills, Esq. one of the representatives in parliament for the borough of Warwick.

Warwick is not noted as being a place of much commercial importance; but within these last few

years the number of its inhabitants have greatly increased, and the shops are much more numerous and splendid, owing to the fashionable spa of Leamington being in its immediate vicinity; which, in the summer season, being the resort of a numerous assemblage of nobility and gentry, gives Warwick at that time a remarkable lively, bustling appearance. Many genteel families have chose Warwick and its neighbourhood for their residences, owing to its delightful situation, numerous picturesque beauties, and the excellence of its roads.

There is a worsted manufactory at Warwick, which employs upwards of five hundred persons; and manufactories where cotton is spun and wove into various articles, as calicoes, dimities, velveteens, &c. which employ a considerable number of hands. A lace manufactory was established at Warwick in 1810, and in 1811 a patent was obtained for making the lace by machinery; about eighty hands are employed in this manufactory, and the lace is considered equally as good as that made in the usual way by hand.

A Canal cut from Birmingham to this place and continued to London, has proved very beneficial to the town, and opened a new source of trade.

Horse Races are annually held at Warwick in September and November, which are very numerously and fashionably attended, and the race course

is exceeded by few in the kingdom. For the accommodation of the company who attend the races, a handsome and spacious *Stand* has been erected on the course by private subscription.

Warwick sends two members to represent it in parliament, which it appears it has done as early as any of the boroughs. The persons qualified to vote are the inhabitants paying scot and lot, and the mayor is the returning officer.

The market at this place is on Saturday, and is generally well attended. Fairs are annually held here on the third Mondays in January and February, Monday before April 5, first Saturday in Lent, May 12, first Monday in June, July 5, second Monday in August, October 12, November 8, and Monday before St. Thomas's day.

According to the returns made to parliament in 1811, Warwick is stated to contain 1,262 houses, and 6,497 inhabitants.

Warwick is mentioned as the birth place of *Walter of Coventry*, a Benedictine monk, who flourished in the early part of the thirteenth century. He wrote various works, among which were the Chronicles of the Britons; the Chronicle of the English Saxons; and Annals, or a Memorial of England. In mentioning the account of this monk, we cannot omit observing, that, notwithstanding the laziness and luxurious indulgence of some unworthy members of

ancient monasteries, the world is indebted to the industrious among them for the preservation of those historical documents by which alone we are enabled to gain any information of the persons or transactions of several centuries.

John Rous,—who was descended, according to Dugdale, from the Rous's of Brinklow, but, according to Leland, from a family of the same name of Ragley, near Alcester,—was born at Warwick, in the reign of Edward the fourth. He received the rudiments of his education at his native place, and afterwards studied at Oxford, where he highly distinguished himself for his extensive learning. On leaving the university he became one of the chantry priests at Guy's Cliff, at which place he wrote several works; one of which, "Chronicum de Regibus Angliæ," has been published; the others principally related to the history and antiquities of Warwickshire. He erected a library over the south porch of St. Mary's church, Warwick, to which he bequeathed his writings; but when Sir William Dugdale wrote his antiquities of this county, these writings had disappeared, and the only productions by Rous, to which he could gain access, were a roll of the Earls of Warwick, containing a brief history relating to each of them, with their portraits and arms; and a Chronicle of the Kings of England. Rous died at Guy's Cliff, in 1491, and was buried in St. Mary's church, Warwick.

GUY'S CLIFF, the seat of Bertie Greatheed, Esq. is situated about a mile from Warwick on the road leading to Coventry. This place derives its name from the steep rocks which rise from the river Avon, and from the ancient legend of the celebrated Guy, Earl of Warwick, living as a hermit, and ending his days here.

In the time of the Britons, according to Rous, St. Dubretius, a Christian Bishop, built here an oratory, which was dedicated to St. Mary Magdalen. In the time of the Saxons, a hermit fixed his cell here; and here the valiant Guy repaired, and excavating a cave out of the rock, passed the residue of his life in penance and prayer, and was buried in the cave.

When Henry the fifth was at Warwick, he visited Guy's Cliff, and was so pleased with the natural beauty of its situation, that he intended to establish here a chantry for two priests, but was prevented by death. However, this design was carried into execution in the reign of Henry the sixth, by Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, who appointed two priests to celebrate mass daily for himself and his Countess, during their lives, and after their death for the welfare of their souls, and of all the faithful. The colossus statue of Guy, which still remains in the chapel, was erected by the Earl in his life-time; but the chapel and habitations for the priests were not built till after his death. John Rous, the celebrated antiquary, as we have before-mentioned in our

account of Warwick, after he left the university of Oxford, resided here as a chantry priest, and at this place he compiled his "Chronicum de Regibus Angliæ," and several other works. At the dissolution the lands of this chapel were valued at £19 10 6, which, with the buildings, &c. were granted to Sir A. Flammock, by Edward the sixth. After various transmissions they became the property of Mr. Edwards, of Kenilworth, and were purchased from a heir of that gentleman by the late Samuel Greatheed, Esq. who married a daughter of the Duke of Ancaster, and built the greatest part of the present mansion. On his death in 1765, it descended to his son Bertie Greatheed, Esq. the present possessor, who has made very considerable alterations to the mansion, particularly in 1818, when the front toward the turnpike road was entirely altered to correspond with the rest of the mansion.

This romantic and beautiful spot is thus described by Leland, in his Itinerary:—"It is the abode of pleasure, a place delightful to the Muses. There are natural cavities in the rocks, small but shady groves, clear and crystal streams, flowery meadows, mossy caves, a gentle murmuring river running among the rocks; and to crown all, solitude and quiet friendly in so high a degree to the Muses."

Guy's Cliff house is built of stone, and presents a very handsome appearance; and from the turnpike road a glimpse of it may be obtained through a long

and venerable avenue of fir trees. It contains a fine collection of paintings, many of them the production of the only son of Mr. Greatheed, the proprietor, who possessed a most extraordinary genius for painting, and who died in 1804, at Vicenza, in Italy, at the early age of twenty-two years. There are two busts here of Mrs. Siddons, the celebrated actress, which we merely mention to remark (what is perhaps not generally known) that this lady, previous to her appearance upon the stage, filled a domestic situation in the Greatheed family.

The chapel was originally built in the reign of Henry the sixth, but the body and tower were repaired by the late Mr. Greatheed; the interior continues in a good state of preservation, and the rooms formerly inhabited by the priests still remain. In the chapel is the statue of Guy, which was erected, as before-mentioned, by Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick; it is nine feet in height, but is now greatly mutilated.

The grounds belonging to Guy's Cliff house are profusely wooded, and abound in romantic scenery. Here is a mill that was in being at the Norman conquest. No stranger, we presume, omits visiting the cave where Guy lived as a hermit, and "which he hewed out of the rock, with his own hands;" on the side of it is an inscription in Saxon characters, at present illegible, though three or four single letters are still discernible. The well, called Guy's Well,

is also shewn, where, according to tradition, that renowned hero repaired daily to quench his thirst.

The cellars, wells, stables and offices at Guy's Cliff, are all cut out of the solid rock.

About half a mile from Guy's Cliff, on the opposite side of the road, is BLACKLOW HILL, a steep and commanding eminence, crowned with a plantation of firs. From the summit of this hill a most delightful prospect of the surrounding country may be obtained, with a fine view of the town of Warwick, Guy's Cliff house, and the meanderings of the Avon. This hill is remarkable as being the place of execution of Piers Gaveston, Earl of Cornwall, who was beheaded here July 1, 1312. This haughty favourite of Edward the second, being closely besieged by the Barons in Scarborough castle, was obliged to capitulate and surrender himself to the Earl of Pembroke, on condition that he should remain his prisoner for two months, and that, in the mean time, endeavours should be used for a general accommodation. But Pembroke did not intend he should escape so easily; therefore taking him to Deddington castle, near Banbury, he purposely left him there with a weak guard, which Guy de Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, being informed of, suddenly assaulted the castle, and made himself master of the person of the unfortunate Gaveston. It appears that Gaveston had particularly offended this nobleman, by giving him the

epithet of the "black dog of Arden," from his swarthy complexion. The Earls of Lancaster, Hereford, and Arundel, being apprized of Warwick's success, immediately repaired to Warwick castle, where Gaveston had been taken; and after holding a consultation, they unanimously determined to put him to death as a common enemy. The unhappy favourite was accordingly conducted to Blacklow hill, where his head was severed from his body, which his enemies beheld with savage exultation. Near the summit of the hill, cut in the rock, is an inscription recording the event and the year of his death, but it appears to have been placed there in modern times, as the date is not correct; it being there engraved 1311, instead of 1312. We extract the following lines on this event from Miss Prickett's historical novel of Warwick Castle:

"Here youthful Cornwall met his hapless fate,
The wretched victim of a country's hate.
With humble pray'rs the weeping monarch sues
This minion's life; the stubborn peers refuse:
Alike his pray'rs, alike his tears they scorn,
Nor pray'rs, nor tears protract the bloody morn,
Torn from his beauteous bride in youth's soft bloom,
Dragg'd unrelenting to an early tomb,
Where yon tall fir trees wave in mournful pride,
The murder'd Gaveston unpitied died."

GROVE PARK, the elegant seat of the Right Honourable Lord Dormer, is about three miles west from Warwick. It is in a beautiful situation, and Dugdale informs us that in the reign of Edward the first, "this place was called *Le Grave*, that is to say the grove, shewing that it took its name originally from being a thick wood of high trees," and at present that name is quite appropriate, as it abounds with timber, growing in the richest luxuriance of nature. The mansion is large, and presents a fine antique appearance, and in the interior there are several elegant apartments. Adjoining the mansion is a Catholic chapel in which mass is celebrated on Sundays, and his lordship, with great liberality, grants free access to strangers, as well as to those who profess the Catholic faith. A fine park extends immediately before the front of the mansion, which is finely adorned by stately trees, well stocked with deer, and ornamented by a beautiful lake.

At FULBROKE, a hamlet in the parish of Sherbourn, about three miles from Warwick, was anciently a castle, built by John, Duke of Bedford, third son of Henry the fourth, to which was annexed a large park. After the Duke's death, this castle was neglected and went to decay; and Sir William Compton, who had the custody of the park in the reign of Henry the eighth, pulled down, by permis-

sion of that monarch, the whole edifice, and used the materials in building a mansion for himself at Compton Wynyate.

BISHOP's TACHBROOK, a large, scattered, but retired village, is about three miles from Warwick and two from Leamington. The distinctive appellation of *Bishop's*, is derived from the circumstance of this place having been in possession of the Bishops of Coventry and Lichfield at the Norman conquest.

The church at this place is a handsome ancient edifice, in the Saxon or early Norman style of architecture, and consists of a nave, two aisles, and a chancel. At the west end of the church is a square tower, and at its east end an ancient cross. The interior is very neatly fitted up, and in the chancel are three fine monuments, richly ornamented, erected to the memory of different branches of the Wagstaffe family. The church also contains many other monumental records.

At TACHBROOK MALLORY, a hamlet in the parish of Bishop's Tachbrook, is an ancient manor house, formerly the residence of the Wagstaffe family, to whom the manor belonged. It has lately been purchased by the Earl of Warwick, and his noble mother, the Dowager Countess, now resides at the manor house.

Journey from Warwick, through Leamington Spa, to Southam.

On leaving Warwick we cross the river Avon by a very elegant bridge of one arch, and leaving on the right the lace manufactory, we, at the distance of about half a mile, pass *Myton House*, the residence of Colonel Steward; half a mile further the road is intersected by the Warwick and Napton canal, a short distance up which is a noble *Aqueduct* that conveys the water of the canal over the Avon, from which some fine landscapes are obtained. Two miles from Warwick is the fashionable and celebrated village of LEAMINGTON PRIORS, on the entrance of which, to the left of the road, is the pleasant mansion of Matthew Wise, Esq. surrounded by thriving plantations, and approached by a fine semicircular avenue of lofty trees.

Leamington is delightfully situated on the banks of the river Leam, from whence the former part of its name is derived; the latter appellation was given to it from its having belonged to the priory at Kenilworth, and also to distinguish it from another Leamington in this county; we think, however, that in the present day this last epithet may be omitted with great propriety, as Leamington Spa is a sufficiently distinctive name; and, in fact, the term Priors seems

to be sinking into obscurity. Leamington has the advantage of being situated in the midst of a most delightful and luxuriously fertile country, and surrounded by objects of attraction * to the antiquary, lover of the picturesque, or mere rambler in search of amusement or change of place, must ever be a favourite resort to all ranks in society. Mr. Warner remarks, in his Northern Tour, that "No county in England is more famous for its roads than Warwickshire," and this particularly applies to the roads in the vicinity of Leamington.

Leamington, from a mean inconsiderable village, has, within the last twenty years, owing to the virtue and fame of its saline springs, risen into great eminence, and now justly ranks with the most elegant and celebrated watering places. Were it possible for us to look back and behold what it was fifty years ago, with what surprise should we be struck to contemplate its appearance at that time with its present state; then there were but a few humble cottages, a stream of water ran through what is now called high-street to supply a large fish-pond in the centre of the village; and another stream ran from thence, down what is now called bath-street, to the river Leam. One public house, the Dog, was the only accommodation that could be procured in the place; and

* We need scarcely revert to the castles of Warwick and Kenilworth, Guy's Cliff house, Stoneleigh abbey, &c. &c. as they will immediately recur to the recollection of many of our readers.

Mr. William Abbotts (the first founder of a set of baths at Leamington), when he came to settle here, wishing to establish another, the magistrates refused to grant him a licence, as they alleged one public house was sufficient for so small a place as Leamington! Now, however, Leamington can boast nearly twenty hotels, inns, and boarding-houses, and

"—— where the hovel stood immur'd in smoke,
Where lay the thorny glebe for years unbroke,
Sudden we view, with pleasure and surprise,
Superb hotels and handsome structures rise,
With aspect fair, and numerous now they stand,
Meet to receive the Princes of the land."

MEDLEY'S *Beauties of Leamington.*

The saline springs to which this place is indebted for its celebrity, have been long known; not only to the inhabitants of the village, but to topographical and medical writers, being mentioned in Camden's Britannia, published about 1586, and many other subsequent works; though it is but recently that they have attained general notice. Dugdale in his "Antiquities of Warwickshire," says "nigh to the east end of the church* there is a spring of salt water, (not

* Dugdale is evidently wrong in this description, as it should be *west*---not east---*end of the church;* and we are sorry to observe (as it may lead to error) in a recent and amusing History of Leamington, that its author has erred in this instance; he first copying it west from Dugdale and afterwards observing that west "is inaccurate, the spring lying to the east of the church." We, however, beg to observe, that *west is correct*, there being as yet no spring to the east of the church.

above a stone's throw from the river Leam,) whereof the inhabitants make use for seasoning of meat."

Leamington is greatly indebted for the esteem in which its waters are now held to the exertions of Dr. Kerr, of Northampton, who was in the habit of recommending them to his patients long before their excellent medicinal effects were generally known; and by his advice Mr. William Abbotts,* sunk a well and erected the first baths, which were opened in June, 1786. The opinion of Dr. Kerr being supported by Dr. Allen, Dr. Johnstone, and other medical men, Leamington began to attract some notice; and in 1790, another well was sunk and a set of baths erected by Matthew Wise, Esq. In 1797, Dr. Lambe, an eminent physician, who was practising at Warwick, published an analysis of these waters in the fifth volume of the "Memoirs of the Literary and Philosophical Society of Manchester," and from that time they have rapidly gained ground in the estimation of the public. These waters have

* In several accounts of Leamington this person, by mistake, has been stiled "Mr. Thomas Abbotts," and called "a native of the village," whereas his name was *William*, and *he was not born at Leamington*. He was born at Long Itchington, near Southam, in this county, but as his father and mother both died while he was quite young, an uncle, who was keeper of the woods belonging to Sir Theophilus Biddulph, and lived at Birdingbury, a short distance from Itchington, took him under his protection. He continued to reside at Birdingbury till his uncle's death, when he removed to Leamington, as his uncle left him the premises where the bath hotel and original baths now stand, at that place.

also been analized by Drs. Winthrop and Middleton, and from the "Chemical Analysis, &c." of the latter gentleman we extract the following remarks. "The excellent effects" observes Dr. Middleton, "produced by the waters in many *chronic disorders*, in *plethoric habits*, in *diseases of the skin*, and in *visceral obstructions*, particularly such as have arisen from a residence in *hot climates*, or from too great indulgence in the pleasures of wine or the table, have stamped them with the highest value, among that class of natural medicines to which they so eminently belong." The Leamington waters are efficacious in bilious complaints and jaundice, cutaneous eruptions, disorders of the digestive organs, diseases of the kidneys and gravel, distorted vertebræ, dyspepsia or indigestion, hypochondriasis, inflamed ulcers, intestinal worms, obstinately costive habits, paralytic affections, phthisis pulmonalis or consumptions, piles, rheumatism and gout, scrofula, suppressed menstruation, and visceral obstructions. There are also many other complaints—observes Dr. Middleton in his excellent treatise—that the Leamington waters are used with safety and with the desired effect; "to the sedentary and the studious, to the man of pleasure, and the man of business; to all who have snffered the current of life to stagnate for want of active exercise, or have driven it on too rapidly by indulgence and excess, let me recommend an annual resort to these salubrious waters."

There are at present six saline wells at Leamington, besides the original spring (mentioned by Dugdale), which belongs to the Earl of Aylesford, as lord of the manor, and is enclosed in a handsome stone building, that was erected at the expense of the late Earl. The next well* in priority of discovery is the one sunk by Mr. Abbotts, in 1786, who at the same time erected baths, now the property of his grandson, Mr. William Smith. These baths were re-built in 1815, and consist of six hot and one child's bath, with dressing rooms, and a small but handsome pump room. The baths belonging to Mr. Wise are situated at the top of bath-street; the spring was discovered in 1790, when baths were erected, but they have since been re-built, and consist of one cold bath, four gentlemen's, seven lady's, and one child's hot baths, with dressing rooms, and a handsome pump room. The baths belonging to Mr. Robbins are situated near the bridge over the Leam, and the well was sunk and baths erected in 1806; they consist of one cold, three hot, and a child's bath, with dressing rooms, and a pump room. The baths erected by Mr. Reed are situated in high-street, and comprise one cold, three hot, and a child's bath, but have no dressing rooms; the

* From this spring, salts are made by evaporating the water to dryness; as it appears they cannot be obtained genuine in the shape of crystals. The salts are sold in bottles, at 2s. 9d. and 4s. 6d. each, at the pump room in bath-street.

spring was discovered in 1810. The spring belonging to the new or royal pump room and baths was also discovered in 1810; these baths are situated on the opposite side of the river to those belonging to Mr. Robbins, and comprize twenty various kinds of baths, with dressing rooms and other conveniences. In 1816 a spring was discovered in Clemen's-street, when baths were erected. These consist of four warm baths, with dressing rooms, and an elegant pump room; they are called "The Imperial Sulphuric Medicinal Fount and Lady's Marble Baths!"

The Leamington Spa Charity is an excellent institution, founded in 1806, by Mr. Benjamin Satchwell, for the purpose of providing baths, free of expense, for such poor sick invalids (properly recommended) who are unable, from their situations in life, otherwise to procure them. The philanthropist must rejoice at the establishment of this laudable institution, and we have the pleasure to observe, that it has been the means of many extraordinary cures having been effected. It is supported by voluntary subscriptions, and for this purpose subscription books are left with the different proprietors of the hotels and boarding-houses.

Leamington *Church* is an ancient, and was till lately a plain structure; but from the recent additions and repairs it has undergone, it now assumes the appearance of a handsome edifice. It is dedicated

to All Saints, and originally belonged as a chapel to Leek Wootton, a village about four miles distant. Mr. Pratt, in his "Guide to Leamington," observes, that "the church was repaired and new pewed in 1800; the Saxon arch capitals between the nave and chancel destroyed, and *renovated* with painted deal wainscot!" The church being quite insufficient for the accommodation of the parishioners and numerous visitors frequenting the spa, a new wing was added in 1816. An old square tower rises from the west end of the church, which, when the new wing was added, was beautified and ornamented with pinnacles; it contains a clock, recently put up; and a peal of four bells, which strike up merrily to hail the arrival of visitors of distinction at Leamington. The interior of the church presents a neat appearance, and is fitted up in a modern style, with handsome pews, and galleries round three of its sides. In the chancel is a monument to the memory of the Right Honourable Edward Willes, of Newbold Comyn, with a latin inscription, by which we are informed that he was recorder of Coventry, and attorney-general for the duchy of Lancaster; afterwards made King's sergeant at law; and, lastly, elevated in 1757, to the office of chief baron of the court of exchequer, and one of his Majesty's privy council in Ireland. He died June 24, 1768, in the sixty-sixth year of his age.

The church-yard contains a number of gravestones, the inscriptions of some of which are illegible

through age. The tomb of Mr. Benjamin Satchwell, who died in December, 1815, stands prominent above all others in the church-yard; it is of the altar kind, surrounded by pallisades, with a poetical inscription from the pen of Mr. Pratt. Mr. Satchwell was a humble mechanic, but merits particular notice as being the first institutor of the Leamington Spa charity; he was also the "village rhymer," and was in the habit of waiting upon each visitor of distinction that arrived at Leamington with a copy of verses. The gravestone of Mr. William Abbotts, who died in 1805, we must not pass unnoticed, as his name will ever stand honourably recorded in the annals of Leamington, as the founder of the first baths at that place. Mrs. Elizabeth Abbotts, relict of the above, died in July, 1818.

In Clemen's-street is *Union Chapel*, a large handsome building, erected by subscription. The religious duties at this chapel are performed by dissenting ministers, but the church prayers are used.

Leamington is divided into old and new town, which are connected by a good stone bridge of three arches, over the river Leam. The old town is situated on the southern bank of the river, and the new town is seated on a fine rising ground on the opposite side. The streets at Leamington are mostly wide, and the houses, baths, and places of amusement being newly erected, present a very handsome appearance. The shops are principally in the old

town; some of them are tastefully decorated, and their proprietors vie with each other in politeness and attention.

The surprising increase of Leamington may furnish an interesting subject of contemplation for the mind; a stranger would not imagine, when surveying the elegant structures of the new town, that, a few years ago the spot where those buildings stand—sprung up as it were by magic—formed fields where the cattle grazed undisturbed, or the yellow corn waved luxuriously in the autumnal season, propitious to the hopes of the farmer. But the whistle of the plough boy, the low of the cattle, or the sound of the mower whetting his scythe, is now no longer heard; and rural affairs are exchanged for all the gaiety and bustle of fashionable life!

The time of general resort to Leamington commences about the beginning of April, and the town generally continues thronged with company till the end of October; and, as the water is equally beneficial and has the same efficacy in all seasons, many families and persons have been induced to remain during the winter months, when every possible provision is made for their comfort and amusement.

The New or Royal Pump Room and Baths beforementioned, are situated in the new town, near the bridge over the Leam, and comprise hot, cold, tepid, vapour, and shower baths; hot and cold *douche* for topical applications; and a chair bath, an excellent

contrivance for conveying invalids into the bath in the most easy and safe manner. They form a most magnificent building of stone, with a spacious colonade carried round three of its sides, formed by pillars of the Doric order, placed in pairs. The pump room is in length more than a hundred feet, proportionately wide and lofty; lighted on one side by a range of seven windows, and on the opposite side by one fine window of painted glass. Upwards of £.25,000 were expended in the erection of this noble pile! and we can confidently assert that these baths and pump room are the most complete in the empire.

The Assembly Rooms are also in new town, situated in upper cross-street. This spacious edifice is built of stone, in a style of noble grandeur, scarcely equalled, and certainly not excelled at any watering place in the kingdom. The superb ball room is eighty-two feet in length, and thirty-six feet in width; from the lofty ceiling are suspended three extremely elegant chandeliers of cut glass, which, when lighted up on the ball nights—when the room is filled by all the fashion and beauty of a spa—present a most brilliant appearance; and the girandoles, mirrors, orchestra, and other appendages, are in the first style of elegance. In the interior, besides the ball room, is a refectory, billiard room, card room, reading room,

&c. which correspond in style with the assembly room.——Francis Stenton, Esq. is master of the ceremonies.

A new set of *Assembly, Card, and Billiard Rooms* were erected in 1818, by Mr. Oldfield, in Clemen's-street, under the name of the Apollo Rooms, which form a large and handsome building.

The Theatre, situated in bath-street, is a handsome building, with a front of Roman cement, and was erected in 1814. The interior is fitted up in a neat and pleasing style, and is ornamented with panoramic views of Leamington, Warwick, Guy's Cliff, &c.—the dramatic performances are offered here three times a week during the season. The theatre was built by Mr. John Simms, and is now the property and under the management of Mr. Elliston, of the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane.

Among the attractive objects of amusement and curiosity at Leamington, is Mr. Bisset's *Paragon Picture Gallery,* on the royal parade, Warwick road. This was till recently in Clemen's-street, but Mr. Bisset finding the rooms too small to contain the whole of his paintings, &c. erected the handsome building to which they have been removed, on the royal parade. It contains upwards of a hundred and fifty paintings, many of them finely executed, and a fine collection of historical and fancy pictures,

&c.—the whole well deserving the notice of visitors. The gallery is also used as a *Reading Room*, and is supplied with London and provincial papers, periodical publications, reviews, &c.

"Hail to the Muse of Painting! thousands say,
Long may she be encourag'd here to stay;
Encourag'd here to waft the boast of art,
And to her Patron wealth and fame impart.
Long the Museum* and Gallery too,
Prove thanks and liberal aid to BISSET due;
While with the ardours of a generous mind,
By him your tasteful pleasures are combin'd."

MEDLEY'S *Beauties of Leamington.*

At the south end of Leamington, beyond the bridge over the Warwick and Napton canal, are *Ranelagh Gardens*, the property of Mr. Cullis, which consist of about ten acres, laid out in fruit and pleasure gardens, walks, and shrubberies, with hot and green houses. These gardens furnish a delightful and agreeable recreation to the visitors of Leamington; and on evenings when there is no performance at the theatre, an excellent band of musicians attend, and the walks, arbours, and seats, are then crowded by a vast concourse of fashionable company.

* Mr. Bisset has disposed of this to Mr. Perry, Bookseller.

The Hotels, Inns, and Boarding Houses at Leamington are numerous and well conducted; some of them are fitted up in the most complete style, and at each accommodations may be obtained equal, if not superior, to those of any watering place. The principal are, Williams's Regent Hotel, Copps's Royal Hotel, Cross's Bedford Hotel, Russell's (late Smith's) Bath Hotel, Rackstrow's Blenheim Hotel, Hopton's Boarding House, Herbert's Tavern, the Crown Inn, and the Bowling Green Inn.

Most of the inhabitants let some part of their houses as lodgings; the prices vary from ten shillings a week to five pounds, according to the number of rooms taken, or the manner in which they are furnished. Whole houses, furnished in a handsome manner, may be obtained from five to ten pounds per week.

An object of attraction at watering places are the *Libraries,* of which Leamington is not deficient; the principal are Elliston's,* in high-street, immediately adjoining Copps's boarding house; and Perry's, which is also in high-street.

* Mr. Elliston has erected a very large and handsome pile of building, in bath street, to which, when completed, we understand the library will be removed.

It may not be amiss to mention here, that there are coaches from the Royal and Bath Hotels, and the Crown Inn, to all parts of the kingdom; jaunting cars to Warwick every hour, and ready on the shortest notice to take parties excursions; donkey carts are constantly plying for hire; and saddle horses, ponies, and donkies are always ready at command.

Strangers visiting Leamington for the benefit of its salubrious waters, will be glad to know that provisions may be had here cheaper than at most places of fashionable resort, and a market has been established which is held every Wednesday during the season. This market is well attended, and plentifully supplied with poultry, butter, eggs, fruit, and all kinds of vegetables, &c. Good fish may be had at the fishmongers', who are regularly supplied by the daily coaches from London, with the various kinds. By means of the Warwick and Napton canal, which passes close to the town, coals are obtained at a reasonable rate, and goods may be forwarded to all parts.

From what we have mentioned, it will be seen that there is no dearth of amusement at Leamington; and being surrounded by the most romantic and picturesque scenery, it forms an attractive place as a central point from which to make excursions to the

surrounding country; and, as a writer in the Gentleman's Magazine observes, "uniting the most beautiful walks, rides, drives, and every other accommodation, amidst the luxury of some of the finest roads in England, conducting to many of the most magnificent mansions, prospects, and ruins in the empire."

In 1801 the population * of Leamington was 315; in 1811, 543; and the astonishing increase of it is such, that at present it amounts to about 2,500!

A road branches off at the top of new town, which forms a pleasant walk or ride to Warwick. At a short distance along this road, in a deep wooded dell to the left, is the entrance to a subterraneous passage, now nearly filled up, which, according to tradition, anciently communicated with Kenilworth castle. This passage, though the entrance is five miles distant from that castle, may have proceeded thither; and if so, probably served the garrison, during a siege, as a sallying place, and for the purpose of providing provisions: we give this as merely conjectural, and, as our information respecting the extent of the passage is handed down

* By the term population, we mean the constant inhabitants of the place.

entirely by tradition, we cannot speak with any degree of certainty.

About half a mile from Leamington, on the bank of the Leam, is the delightful mansion of the Rev. Edward Willes, surrounded by beautiful gardens, lawns, fine plantations, and grounds extending as far as Leamington. These grounds and plantations were formerly open to the visitors of the spa; but, owing to the wanton imprudence of some persons on the privacy and property of their venerable and reverend owner, a part of them have been barred from inspection.

Leaving Leamington, our road runs parallel with the river Leam more than a mile, which meanders through verdant meadows a little to the left, and the rising ground beyond is ornamented by groves of fine trees, belonging to the beautiful villa of the Rev. Edward Willes,—a charming view of which is obtained from the road. About a mile from Leamington we cross, by a stone bridge, a small stream that runs into the Leam, and immediately ascend another bridge over the Warwick and Napton canal, when an ancient manor house, called *Radford Hall,* situated on an eminence commanding pleasing prospects, appears in view. Radford church is situated near the manor house, and a short distance further is the village of RADFORD, where H. G. Lewis, Esq. of Malvern hall, in this county, has a small house, fitted up in a very fanciful style.

About a mile to the left of Radford, on a commanding eminence, is the small retired village of OFFCHURCH, which is mentioned by many historians to have been a place of great consequence in the time of the Saxons. Offa, eleventh King of the Mercians, built here a stately palace, where he occasionally resided; and Dugdale informs us, that the church first took that monarch's name and afterwards the village. Fremundus, son of Offa, who was surprised and treacherously murdered near Harbury, was, according to Camden, buried here in his father's palace—this Prince was afterwards canonized. In the reign of Edward the confessor, Offchurch belonged to Earl Leofric, who bestowed it upon the monks at Coventry, and it continued in their possession till the dissolution, when it was seized by Henry the eighth, who granted it in the thirty-fourth of his reign, to Sir Edmund Knightly, Knight, whose descendants in the female line, who have assumed his name, still possess it.

At this place is an ancient mansion, the seat of the above family, called *Offchurch Bury*, which Mr. Pratt observes bears a great resemblance to the palace of Scone, the coronation place of the Scottish Kings. It is situated on the bank of the Leam, in a very rural and retired situation; and though built at different periods, some parts of it preserve a character of ancient grandeur. The front is nearly covered with a beautiful vine, which is trailed over

the viranda that forms the entrance to the mansion. Miss Medley, in her "Beauties of Leamington," describes it as follows:—

"Where erst the Mercian Kings kept ancient court,
The warrior and the stateman's fam'd resort;
Held their loud revels, and their boist'rous feasts,
While armour clash'd amidst the valorous guests!
'Tis now the abode of elegance and ease,
Plann'd for convenience—and adorn'd to please."

The park and grounds belonging to Offchurch bury are adorned by several pieces of water, and admirably shaded with venerable trees, some of which are very large and beautiful; a chesnut tree in particular, on the south of the bury, for its circumference and number of branches, is an object of great curiosity; and the foliage is so close, that it is said to be capable of covering and concealing three hundred persons!

The church at Offchurch is a neat structure, standing on a commanding eminence, and among the numerous pleasing views from this village, one from the church-yard claims particular notice. The parsonage house, which is near the church, is a charming residence, surrounded with gardens and pleasure grounds, laid out with admirable taste.

Continuing our journey from Radford, and at the distance of a mile from thence, and near the fifth mile from Warwick, the road is intersected by the Roman *Fosse-way*, which runs in a direct line from

High Cross, on the borders of Leicestershire, to Cirencester, in Gloucestershire. About two miles further is the small village of UFTON, one of the twenty-four places given by Earl Leofric to the monastery at Coventry. It is situated on a high rocky eminence, and its church is a conspicuous object, but contains nothing of interest. At this place is a large wood, noted for its being an excellent fox cover.

At Ufton a road branches off to HARBURY, a large scattered village, containing near a thousand inhabitants. Its church is a large respectable structure, and the tower contains a clock and an excellent peal of five bells. The dissenters at this place are numerous, and have here a commodious chapel.

CHESTERTON is situated about one mile from Harbury, and six from Warwick; and though at present a small village, it is recorded to have been in the time of the Romans a place of considerable consequence, and some antiquaries mention that at this place there was a Roman station. The Fosseway passes through the lordship, near which are very visible remains of a castramentation, of square form and great extent, very probably of Roman construction, as many Roman coins have, at various periods, been dug up here.

The large ancient manor house at this place, formerly the seat of the honourable and powerful family of Peyto, who resided here from the reign of Edward

the third, for many ages, was taken down in 1802, by order of Lord Willoughby de Brooke, into whose possession the estate came by descent from his maternal ancestors.

The church, which is situated a short distance from the scite of the manor house, has a rural and antique appearance. It was erected soon after the conquest, by Richard Forestarius, who had greater part of this lordship given him by William the conqueror, and it contains three fine monuments, consecrated to the memory of the Peyto family.

In the reign of Henry the fifth, a vicar of this parish, named Lacy, was indicted on the charge "of receiving and harbouring" the celebrated and enlightened reformer, Sir John Oldcastle, Lord Cobham, who had been convicted of heresy; the liberal and humane vicar, however, received the King's pardon, and posterity must confess he was entitled to the highest praise. Sir John Oldcastle was a follower of Wickliffe's doctrines, the supporter of itinerant preachers, and shook by his writings the Roman see. He, in consequence, incurred the hatred of the Romish clergy, and was by them accused of being a heretic and traitor, and committed to the tower; he, however, escaped from confinement, but after concealing himself at different places for four years, was seized and conveyed to London, where he was bound upon a gallows, had a fire lighted under him, and roasted alive, in 1417.

On the summit of a hill in the parish of Chesterton, is a large circular *Windmill*, which claims our notice from its having been erected from a design of the famous architect Inigo Jones. It was built in 1632, at the expense of Sir Edward Peyto. The body is supported by six arches, with pilaster capitals, and the top is surmounted by a leaden dome, which revolves for the purpose of removing the fliers affixed to it as the state of the wind requires. From this hill extensive prospects may be obtained over a considerable tract of fine country; the castle and tower of St. Mary's, Warwick, and the spires of the churches at Coventry, may be distinctly observed.

Returning from this digression, we resume our journey at Ufton; and, at the distance of about two miles from thence, we cross a small stream by a newly erected stone bridge, leaving on the left the seat of Mrs. Fauquier, and about a mile further arrive at SOUTHAM, a small market town of considerable antiquity, situated on the turnpike road leading from Warwick to London, and on the high road leading from Coventry to Banbury; distant 83 miles from London, 10 from Warwick, 12 from Coventry, and 13 from Banbury.

Southam, according to Dugdale, was given by King Ethelred, about eighty years before the Norman conquest, to Earl Leofwyne, whose son, Earl Leofric, bestowed it on the monks of Coventry, in

1047, on his foundation of that monastery. At the conqueror's survey the parish of Southam is mentioned to have contained four hides, having two mills, rated at four shillings, and woods one mile in length and half a mile in breadth; these woods the King kept in his own hands, but it is impossible at this distant period to ascertain the scite of them, as in Dugdale's time, to use his own words, "there was scarcely a tree left."

The monks of Coventry continued in possession of this place till the general dissolution of religious establishments, in the reign of Henry the eighth, which monarch, in the thirty-fourth of his reign, granted it to Sir Edmund Knightly, Knight, on whose death it descended to his cousin, and was divided into five parts. Dr. Thomas, in his edition of "Dugdale's Antiquities," states, that in his time it was divided into thirty-two parts.

Henry the third, in the eleventh year of his reign, granted a market to be held here on Wednesdays, and an annual fair for eight days, beginning on the second of October; but, in the twenty-third year of the same reign, the days for the market and fair being found inconvenient, they were by a new charter altered; the market to Monday, and the fair to St. George's day and seven days after.

The Church at Southam, dedicated to St. James, is a large and handsome ancient Gothic structure; but its interior presents nothing that particularly merits notice. A small fine-toned organ was placed

in it in 1819, by voluntary subscription; it was also made much more commodious and warm, by a considerable extension of the gallery, and the church and chancel being ceiled. The spire is forty-two feet in height, springing from a square tower at the west end of the church, which contains a clock and a peal of five bells. The parsonage house, contiguous to the church-yard, is a commodious residence.

An Infirmary, for the relief of persons afflicted with diseases of the eye and ear, was established at Southam in 1818, by the spirited and laudable endeavours of Mr. Smith, surgeon, of that town, who is critically skilled as an oculist and aurist. The building erected for the accommodation of the patients of this infirmary is in the Gothic style of architecture, with a composition front, on an elevated and healthy situation, and it is fitted up in the most commodious manner. This excellent establishment, under the patronage of the Earl of Aylesford and Earl Spenser, is supported by annual subscriptions and voluntary contributions; and, certainly, a more humane institution cannot be devised than this, which is intended to mitigate two of the most deplorable afflictions of the human species.

A School was established at Southam in 1816, on the plan of Dr. Bell, when a large building was erected for its use. About sixty boys and sixty girls receive instruction in this school daily.

An old work has recently passed through the author's hands, which in treating of Southam, it is

remarked that the town of Southam, in Warwickshire, is small, "but peculiarly remarkable for its excellent cyder, large quantities whereof are made, and exported to all parts." We must observe here, that Dugdale does not make mention of Southam having ever been noted for cyder; nor do the oldest persons in the parish recollect there having been, in their time, any cyder mills here; and, at the present, few places have a less number of apple trees at them.

At Southam and in its vicinity, there are several springs of saline water; but, as they have not been analized, we cannot give a more full account of them than that they are to the taste much like the waters at Leamington, and that the farmer fenced them from his cattle.

The market at Southam is on Monday, and fairs are annually held here on the first Monday in Lent, Easter Monday, Monday before Whitsuntide, and July 10. The one held on the Monday before Whitsuntide is generally very large, and is attended by most of the beaux and belles in the neighbourhood; on this day, at Southam, there is occasionally a grand procession, similar to the annual one at the shew-fair at Coventry, except there is no *Lady Godiva* at this place to grace the procession. There are horse races annually at Southam in the month of May.

Southam is principally indebted for the business which is at present transacted at it, (as there is no

particular manufacture carried on in the place,) to travellers passing through, and to the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages, who make it their principal mart. It contains 188 houses, and about 1,000 inhabitants.

Edward Tomes and Thomas Wood, Esqrs. reside at Southam in commodious mansions.

In 1815, as some labourers were getting stone near a farm house called *Southam Grounds*, in the vicinity of this place, they found about ten human skeletons, with the remnants of some articles of wearing apparel, &c. These skeletons have been generally supposed to be the remains of some persons killed at the battle of Edge Hill; but to this opinion we object—as it does not seem likely, that these bodies would have been brought so far from the field of battle, and then interred promiscuously in one grave; we, therefore, think it more probable that they were slain in the skirmish between the troops of King Charles the first, under the Earl of Northampton, and those of the parliament, under Lord Brooke, which took place between Southam and Bishop's Itchington, in August, 1643.

About three miles from Southam, at LADBROKE, is the seat of William Palmer, Esq.

At EATHORPE, about six miles from Southam, is the seat of Robert Vyner, Esq.

LONG ITCHINGTON, about two miles from Southam, on the road leading to Coventry, is recorded to have been formerly one of the chief towns

in the county; at present, however, it is a village of not a hundred houses.

At the time when Queen Elizabeth, in 1575, honoured the Earl of Leicester with her presence at Kenilworth castle, a tent was pitched at this place, in which her Majesty dined on her journey there. In an account of that royal visit, this tent is compared for elegance and number of rooms to a "beautifull pallais," and is mentioned to have been so spacious that it had "seaven cart lode of pynz perteining too it." The Queen rode on horseback from London, and the pastime of hunting was prepared to interest her ride from Itchington to Kenilworth, so that it was eight o'clock in the evening before she arrived there.

Long Itchington is memorable as being the birthplace of *Wulstan*, the last Saxon Bishop of Worcester. His father's name was Ælfstan, and his mother's Ulgeva, whence his own name was compounded into Wulstan. He was educated at Peterborough, and took the habit and order of a monk at Worcester, where he was ordained deacon and priest. His first preferment was that of being master and guardian of the children; next chanter, then cyrcward or treasurer, at length prior, and finally, in 1062, bishop. The present cathedral church at Worcester was built by Wulstan; the one anciently there, built by St. Oswald, having been burnt in 1041, by the soldiers of King Hardicanute. The

cathedral was begun in 1084, and finished, as also the monastery at Worcester, in 1088. "It was the custom in that, as well as in succeeding ages, to raise funds for building churches and monasteries, by the sale of licences to commit crimes, which were softened down into the papal denomination of indulgences. But, to the eternal honour of Wulstan, he despised such resources; and, to the utmost extent of his knowledge, would not consent to effect even a good end by bad means." *

This pious prelate, who, it is recorded, sometimes prayed for four days and nights without ceasing, was so deeply affected when he saw the workmen executing his orders in taking down the walls of the original church, that he wept; and some of his attendants expostulating with him, and reminding him that he should rather rejoice, as he was preparing in the room of it an edifice of greater splendour, and more proportioned to the enlarged number of his monks; he replied, "I think far otherwise; we poor wretches destroy the works of our forefathers, only to get praise to ourselves: that happy age of holy men knew not how to build stately churches, but under any roof they offered themselves living temples unto God, and by their examples excited those under their care to do the same; but we, on the contrary, neglecting the care of souls, labour to heap up stones."

* Storer's History of Worcester Cathedral.

The author of a "History and Antiquities of Worcester," after mentioning many virtues and praise-worthy actions of Bishop Wulstan, observes, "Universally through life Bishop Wulstan seems to have supported an amiable and unsullied character, which he obtained as much by the piety of his life, as by a close attention to the happiness and temporal welfare of his people." He died in January, 1095, and was buried in the cathedral he had erected; and in 1203 he was made a saint.

Agreeably to the fashion of the age, the father and mother of Wulstan separated; and "being mush devoted to the service of God, towards the latter end of their days," one became a monk and the other a nun in the Worcester convents.

About two miles from Long Itchington, at BIRDINGBURY, is a fine ancient mansion, the seat of Sir Theophilus Biddulph, Bart.

A short distance from Birdingbury, at BOURTON-ON-DUNSMORE, is the handsome mansion of John Shuckburgh, Esq.

BISHOP's ITCHINGTON, one of the twenty-four places given by Earl Leofric to the monastery at Coventry, is about three miles south-west from Southam. It derives the former part of its name from having been the property of the Bishops of Coventry and Lichfield, to whom it was granted by the monks, and in whose possession it continued till the reign of Edward the sixth, when Richard Samp-

son, the then Bishop, sold it to Thomas Hawkins, *alias* Fisher, Esq. This gentleman, according to Dugdale, was as greedy of church lands as other courtiers in those days: he had the church at this place taken down to build him a mansion in its room! and a chapel of ease belonging to it was made the parish church.

Edward, the son of Mr. Hawkins, who succeeded him as lord of this manor, was a youth of very dissipated habits; and by his profligacy soon squandered away the property accumulated by his father, and ultimately ended his days in prison. Dugdale observes, that "the third generation never enjoyed this property since it was alienated from the bishopric!"

In the reign of Henry the third, a market on Wednesdays, and an annual fair for three days, were granted to be held here, but they have both been long discontinued.

NAPTON is situated about three miles from Southam, on the road to Daventry; and, from its situation on a considerable eminence, commands extensive prospects. In the reign of Edward the second, a charter for a weekly market to be held here on the Thursday, and an annual fair for three days was obtained; they, however, have been long discontinued. The Rev. T. R. Bromfield, rector of Napton, is a very active magistrate for the county of Warwick.

About two miles from Napton, on the same road, in an elevated situation, near the eastern border of the county, is the village of SHUCKBURGH SUPERIOR, where is a noble mansion called *Shuckburgh Hall*, the seat of the ancient family of Shuckburgh, "who took the astroites or star-stones, often dug up here, for their coat of arms." To this mansion is attached a park of considerable extent, finely wooded, and stocked with deer.

In Dr. Thomas's edition of "Dugdale's Warwickshire," the following interesting account of Richard Shuckburgh, Esq. ancestor of Sir Francis Shuckburgh, the present owner of the above mansion, is given:—

"As King Charles I. marched to Edgcot, near Banbury, on the 22nd Oct. 1642, he saw him hunting in the fields not far from Shuckburgh, with a very good pack of hounds, upon which it is reported, that he fetched a deep sigh, and asked who that gentleman was that hunted so merrily that morning when he was going to fight for his crown and dignity? And being told that it was this Richard Shuckburgh, he was ordered to be called to him, and was by him very graciously received. Upon which he went immediately home, armed his tenants, and the next day attended on him in the field, where he was knighted, and was present at the battle of Edge hill. After the taking of Banbury castle, and

his Majesty's retreat from those parts, he went to his own seat, and fortified himself on the top of Shuckburgh hill, where being attacked by some of the parliament forces, he defended himself till he fell, with most of his tenants about him; but being taken up, and life perceived in him, he was carried away prisoner to Kenilworth castle, where he lay a considerable time, and was forced to purchase his liberty at a dear rate."

Within these few years the appearance of Shuckburgh park has been considerably changed, with a view to obliterate the recollection of the following dreadful catastrophe :—

In 1809, a Lieutenant Sharp, of the Bedford militia, was with other military officers in the habit of visiting at Shuckburgh hall, when he unhappily formed an attachment with a daughter of Sir Stukeley Shuckburgh. The attachment was mutual; but after it was discovered by Sir Stukeley, Lieutenant Sharp was forbid the house, and Miss Shuckburgh, on the disapproval of her parents, prepared herself to break off the acquaintance. Several letters had been exchanged, previous to the discovery, between the lovers; and these Miss Shuckburgh requested might be returned, and Mr. Sharp appointed a time. The lady was to deposit the letters she had received in a summer house in the garden, on Saturday evening, March 25, 1809, and she was assured by him that on

the following morning the letters written by herself should be deposited in the same place. Accordingly on the Sunday morning, at an early hour, she repaired to the summer house for the letters; she there found Mr. Sharp, who, it is supposed, had lingered here all night, meditating his own death, and that of the object of his tenderest desires. Miss Shuckburgh was observed by a servant to quit the mansion, and walk towards the summer house; and as he wished to see the cause of her visit to that sequestered spot so early in the morning, he followed her unseen, and listening at a short distance heard two voices in earnest dispute. In a short time he heard the discharge of a pistol, and a person fell—two seconds elapsed, and another pistol was discharged! The amazed servant immediately alarmed the family, and on entering the summer house a shocking scene presented itself, as both Miss Shuckburgh and Lieutenant Sharp were lifeless corpses, and weltering in their blood.

The church at Shuckburgh is dedicated to St. John the Baptist, and contains several monuments to the memory of different branches of the Shuckburgh family. One of the windows in the church of painted glass, St. John in the Wilderness, executed by Mr. Egginton, of Birmingham, is a masterly production; some other paintings, principally by the same artist, adorn its other windows.

WORMLEIGHTON is a small village, situated about six miles from Southam, near the road leading to Banbury. At the conqueror's survey, this place formed part of the immense possessions in this county of the Earl of Mellent; and, after various transmissions, it was purchased by John Spenser, Esq. who erected the noble mansion that adorns this place, and at which he resided in great affluence and splendour. He was knighted by Henry the eighth, and his descendant, Robert, in the first year of the reign of James the first, was created a baron, by the title of Lord Spenser of Wormleighton. Earl Spenser, a descendant of this nobleman, is now owner of the estate and mansion.

A short distance from Wormleighton, and about seven miles from Southam, is the village of FARNBOROUGH, mentioned by Dugdale to have been written in Doomsday Book *Fernberge:* this he conjectures was derived "from the natural disposition of the soil to bear fern; the latter syllable *berge* signifying in our old English a little hill, and such we see to be the situation of this town." The manor of Farnborough was in the possession of a family named Say from the reign of Richard the first to that of Edward the third, when it passed by purchase to Thomas de Raleigh, in whose family it continued till it was sold, about the beginning of the eighteenth century, to Ambrose Holbeach, Esq.

whose descendant, William Holbeach, Esq. is the present owner, and resides here at a handsome mansion, in a charming situation, beautified by a

——— " spacious terrace, and surrounding lawns,
Deck'd with no sparing cost of planted clump,
Or ornamented building."

A chalybeate spring rises at Farnborough, known by the name of *St. Botolph's Well*, which was formerly resorted to by the credulous and superstitious, for its wonder-working miracles!

Near Farnborough, at WARMINGTON, was an alien priory of benedictine monks, cell to the abbey of Preaux, in Normandy. It was founded by Henry de Newburgh, Earl of Warwick; but, during the war with France, its revenues were seized by Henry the sixth, and given to the carthusian monastery at Witham, Somersetshire.

Journey from Southam, through Leamington Hastang and Dunchurch, to Rugby.

On commencing this journey nothing that particularly deserves notice occurs, till, at the distance of about four miles, we leave a short distance to the left the village of **LEAMINGTON HASTANG** (often but erroneously called *Leamington Hastings),* seated on the southern bank of the river Leam, from whence the former part of its name is derived; and the latter from the family of Hastang, who were lords of this place, and resided here in great splendour, holding several high offices, for many ages. It passed from this family, in default of male issue, to Ralph, Earl of Stafford, one of whose descendants sold it to Sir T. Trevor, Knight, and he bequeathed it to Sir Charles Wheler, Bart. whose descendant, the Rev. Sir Charles Wheler, Bart. is the present owner, and his son resides here in a handsome mansion.

There are two alms houses at Leamington Hastang, one founded by Lady Dorothy Wheler, the other by Humphry Davis, Gent. The latter foundation was in Dr. Thomas's time (1730) valued at £42 1 6 per annum; but it appears, from an inscription fixed on the building, that this benefaction was unjustly withheld from the poor of this parish for

twenty-six years previous to 1663, when it was recovered by the assistance of Sir T. Trevor, Knight, for the support of the original foundation. Also at this place there are two plots of ground, together about one hundred and eighty acres, for the benefit of the poor, given when the fields in this parish were enclosed in 1669, by the lord of the manor and other freeholders.

The church here is a handsome structure, and contains several monuments to the Trevor and Wheler families, and the windows are ornamented by painted glass. The church-yard is very rural, being surrounded by fine yew and other trees.

Continuing our journey, and at the distance of about eight miles from Southam, we arrive at DUNCHURCH, situated upon Dunsmore heath, remarkable for the legendary tale of the dun cow of the wood, and it is rendered very lively from its being on the great London road to Coventry.

The church at this place is a venerable Gothic structure, with a handsome tower at the west end. In the interior, on the wall of the south aisle, is a monument, before which are folding doors of marble to preserve the inscription, to the memory of Thomas Newcombe, Esq. who died in 1681; and of his son Thomas, printer to the Kings Charles the second, James the second, and William the third: he died in 1691. This last gentleman gave by his will six hundred pounds for the building of an alms house at

this place, and for the maintenance of three poor men and three poor women, born in the parish of Dunchurch.

A free school was founded at Dunchurch in 1707, by Francis Boughton, Esq. of Causton, for the education of the poor children of both sexes, in this parish. This is an excellent institution, and is well conducted; the number of boys, who are daily educated, are about fifty, and many girls are instructed in the morning, in reading, writing, and arithmetic.

It was at Dunchurch that a party of the conspirators of the gunpowder plot, in the reign of James the first, were to have assembled on the pretence of hunting, but for the purpose of seizing the Princess Elizabeth, then at Combe abbey, and proclaiming her Queen.—*See page* 9.

About three miles from Dunchurch, near the grand junction canal and the London road, is the village of WILLOUGHBY, where a weekly market on Tuesday was formerly held; an annual fair is at present held here on Whit Monday.

Wilkes, in his "Beauties of England," after mentioning that some Roman antiquities, as silver and brass coins, &c. have been found here, observes, that "The people have a notion of great riches being hid under ground; and there is a vulgar report that under one *balk* or *mere*, that is, division between the ploughed fields, there is as much money as

would purchase the whole lordship; but they dare not dig, they pretend, for fear of spirits." Beside coins found at Willoughby, mosaic pavements, pot-hooks, fire-shovels, &c. have been discovered.

At this place was formerly a handsome cross, which, according to Wilkes, was near being demolished in the reign of Charles the first, as "The parliament soldiers had tied ropes about it to pull it down; but the vicar quenched their zeal with strong beer, after having harangued them concerning its innocence!"

At SAWBRIDGE, in the parish of Wolfram-cote, about six miles south-east from Dunchurch, near the border of the county, was found in 1689, in a well, which was discovered by the taking down an old barn, several Roman urns, of grey earth, curiously polished. Twelve were taken out whole, and as many broke, by the fall of a stone from above.

On the summit of KNIGHTLOW HILL, on the London road, between Dunchurch and Coventry, about a mile from Ryeton-upon-Dunsmore, is a tumulus or artificial mount of earth, which gives the name of *Knightlow*, signifying mount, to the hundred in which it is situated. This mount appears to be a sepulchral monument, and probably covers the remains of some celebrated warrior. On its summit was formerly a cross, which was taken down at the dissolution. Thirty-five places in this hundred owe

a certain rent to the lord of the hundred, called wroth money, and wrath or swarff penny, supposed by Dugdale to be the same as ward penny. These rents must be paid at the cross before sun-rise on Martinmas day, and the party paying them must go thrice round the cross saying *the wrath money*, and then put them in the hole of the cross, before good witness: if this ceremony be omitted, the forfeiture is forty shillings and a white bull! Till within these few years this curious custom was regularly performed, but it is now discontinued. On the tumulus, where the cross formerly stood, is a large block of stone, in the middle of which is a hole where the wrath money was deposited after the destruction of the cross. From this mount, some fine and extensive prospects may be obtained; and, among other objects, the spires of the churches at Coventry may be very distinctly observed.

The turnpike road for nearly four miles from Knightlow hill towards Dunchurch, is planted on each side with fine fir trees, forming a beautiful and complete avenue; it is said to be somewhat in appearance like some of the roads in France and Flanders.

About a mile from Knightlow hill, on the road side towards Dunchurch, is an inn, called the Black Dog, where the petty sessions for the hundred of Knightlow are held, and where the commissioners of taxes for this hundred sit to hear appeals.

Resuming our journey, and at the distance of about a mile from Dunchurch, to the right of the road, is a handsome house, the residence of Abraham Hume, Esq. To the left of the road is the village of BILTON, where is an ancient mansion, called *Bilton Hall,* which, from its having been the residence of the celebrated Addison, must be viewed with feelings of a peculiar nature; and what renders it very interesting, is that the furniture still remains that was used by Addison himself. Many of the paintings also remain in the same stations they occupied when that illustrious character resided here. The house is in a very retired situation; it is low, but spacious, and appears from its irregularity to have been built at different periods. Its extensive gardens continue laid out in straight lines, with thick hedges of yew; and a long walk, on the north side of the pleasure grounds, is still called Addison's walk, and it is said to have been his favourite haunt when intent on solitary reflection.

Mr. Addison purchased Bilton hall and estate, in 1711, of William Boughton, Esq. for ten thousand pounds, and he resided here in 1716, when he married the Countess of Warwick.

The Honourable John Simpson is the present owner of the above mansion and estate, to whom they were bequeathed by the daughter of Mr. Addison, by the Countess of Warwick.

The church at Bilton is a handsome Gothic structure, with a neat tapering spire. In the chancel are interred several of the Boughton family, anciently lords of this place; the daughter of Mr. Addison is also interred in the chancel, but without any monumental inscription.

Three miles from Dunchurch we arrive at RUGBY, a market town, pleasantly situated on an eminence, 16 miles from Warwick, 13 from Coventry, and 84 from London. It is near the river Avon, and the grand junction canal passes within about a mile of the town, communicating with the Avon, Thames, Severn, Humber, Dee, &c. thus affording the means of transporting goods to all parts of the world.

The ancient name of this place was *Rocheberie*, which signifies a castle or house on a rock; but it was soon afterwards changed to Rokeby, and it is so written in Doomsday Book.

Here was anciently a small *Castle*, supposed by Dugdale to have been erected in the reign of Stephen, and demolished by command of Henry the second, in the early part of his reign. The only vestiges of this castle at present, are the earth works, which are elevated twenty-one feet, and part of the moat that surrounded it.

Rugby derives great celebrity from its *School*, founded in the ninth year of the reign of Queen

Elizabeth, by Laurence Sheriff, who was a native of Brownsover, a small village near Rugby, and a grocer of London. This was at first a *Free Grammar School,* for the children of the parishes of Rugby and Brownsover only; but it has since been extended to other places. The major part of the scholars, however, at this school are not on the foundation, as the learned languages, the course of education *now* prescribed, make its utility for general instruction but very limited to boys of the middle rank in society.

The annual value of the land left by the founder for the support of the school, amounted only to £116 17 6, up to the year 1780; but since that period it has so rapidly increased in value, (the land being situated in Lamb's Conduit Fields, London,) that at present it brings to the school an annual revenue of more than £1,600, and it is expected this sum may be doubled at the expiration of the leases granted.

There are fifteen exhibitioners, who are allowed £40 per annum, to help to defray their expenses at Oxford or Cambridge, in any college or hall they please, for the term of seven years.

The affairs of Rugby school are managed by twelve trustees, noblemen and gentlemen of this county, who hold regular meetings, and before whom an annual examination takes place in the month of August. This examination is attended by a member from each of our two universities, appointed by the

vice-chancellors, as at this period the vacancies of the exhibitions are filled up. The number of scholars amount at present to about 360; but of these only about 40 or 50 are on the foundation. The present head master is Dr. Wool.

The funds of the school having of late years accumulated so much, it was thought advisable to take down the old building, and erect an edifice that should be worthy of so noble a foundation; this has accordingly been done, and it has a very magnificent appearance. It is built in the style of architecture prevalent in the reign of Queen Elizabeth; the materials are white brick, with the angles, cornices, &c. of stone, and the principal front extends 220 feet. The head master's house is a superb edifice, and well adapted for the head of so extensive an establishment.

Laurence Sheriff, founder of the school, also endowed alms houses at Rugby, for the support of four poor men, two of them to be inhabitants of Rugby and two of Brownsover; but as the value of this endowment has considerably increased, the number of almsmen have been augmented by the trustees.

Besides the school founded by Laurence Sheriff at Rugby, there is another for 30 boys, founded by Mr. Richard Elborow, of Rugby, who also founded here alms houses for six poor widows.

Rugby has no particular manufacture, but depends principally for support on the school, many

of the scholars being accommodated in boarding houses in the town, some of which are large and handsome.

Rugby *Church*, dedicated to St. Andrew, is partly composed of stone said to be taken from the ruins of the old castle; it has a square tower at the west end, containing five bells and a set of chimes. The church has recently been repaired and enlarged, and the interior is fitted up in a handsome commodious manner, and contains an organ. Several of the Cave family are buried in the church-yard, and a table monument covers the remains of Joseph Cave, father of Edward, the first projector of the Gentleman's Magazine, whom we mention in our account of Newton.

There are two meeting houses in Rugby, one for the Independents, and the other for the Methodists.

The market at this place is on Saturday, and fairs are held annually here on the second Tuesday after 12th day, February 17, March 31, May 15, July 7, August 21, Monday before New Michaelmas day, Monday before October 27, November 22, Tuesday before St. Thomas's day, and Monday after Christmas day. Several of these fairs are exceedingly well attended by London, Birmingham, and other dealers, as Rugby is situated in a fertile grazing country, near the borders of this county, and those of Leicester and Northampton.

According to the returns made to parliament in 1811, Rugby contains 335 houses, and 1,805 inha-

bitants; since that time, however, the number of houses and inhabitants have considerably increased.

HILL MORTON, a considerable village, is about two miles from Rugby, seated on the banks of a rivulet that rises at Creek, in Northamptonshire, and falls into the Avon a short distance from hence. This place takes its name from its situation, being part on a hill and part in a valley. A market on Saturday, afterwards altered to Wednesday, and an annual fair for three days, were granted to be held here in the reign of Henry the third, but they are now discontinued.

The church at Hill Morton contains several ancient monuments; one of which is to Thomas de Astley, lord of Hill Morton, in the reign of Henry the third, who obtained the charter for the market; on this monument he is represented cross-legged and in armour.

At BROWNSOVER, about two miles from Rugby, (mentioned before as the birth-place of Laurence Sheriff, the founder of Rugby school,) there is a pleasant and commodious mansion, the seat of Sir Egerton Leigh, Bart.

At CLIFTON, about two miles from Rugby, was born in 1686, *Thomas Carte*, a very learned English historian. He was educated at Oxford, but took his degrees of M. A. at Cambridge. When in orders he was appointed reader of the abbey church at Bath, where he in a sermon took occasion to vindicate King Charles the first, from aspersions with

regard to the Irish rebellion, and this discourse gave rise to his first publication, entitled "The Irish Massacre set in a clear Light." Upon the accession of George the first, Mr. Carte's principles not permitting him to take the oaths to the new government, he assumed a lay habit. He continued his attachment to the Stuarts, and was secretary to Bishop Atterbury, and when that prelate was committed to the tower a proclamation was issued offering a thousand pounds for the apprehension of Mr. Carte; he, however, escaped into France, where he remained six or seven years, till Queen Caroline, whose regard for men of letters is well known, obtained permission for him to return to England. He had not long been restored to his native country before he published his "History of James, Duke of Ormond," in three volumes, folio. In 1738, he issued proposals for a new "History of England;" three volumes of which appeared in his life-time, and a fourth, that ends with 1654, appeared after his death:—this work is written with eminent exactness and diligence, and is allowed to be, in point of information, a production of great merit. Mr. Carte, besides the above-mentioned works, published an edition of "Thuanus," in seven volumes, folio; "A Collection of Original Letters and Papers," two volumes, octavo; also a great number of tracts and controversial pamphlets. He died in April, 1754.

At Clifton, on the Watling-street which enters Warwickshire in that parish, are considerable remains of the great Roman station, termed *Tripontium*.

The church at Clifton had formerly a very high spire, and, from its being situated on a hill, might be seen for many miles round; but in 1689, being out of repair, it was taken down.

At NEWTON, a hamlet in the parish of Clifton, was born, in 1691, *Edward Cave*, under whose auspices the Gentleman's Magazine, "a species of publication which may be considered as forming an epocha in the literary history of this kingdom," made its appearance. He was educated at Rugby free grammar school, and was afterwards clerk in the excise, but soon left that situation, and was bound apprentice to Mr. Collins, a printer of some reputation, in London. In two years he attained so much skill in his art, and acquired such confidence with his master, that he was sent by him, without any superintendant, to conduct a printing-office at Norwich, and publish a weekly newspaper. In this undertaking he had to encounter some opposition, which produced a public controversy, and first procured him the reputation of a writer. When his apprenticeship was completed he obtained a place in the post-office, and his spare time he occupied in correcting the "Gradus ad Parnassum," and editing various publications. On leaving this situation, he

had, by his constancy of diligence and diversity of employment, collected money sufficient to purchase a small printing-office, and began publishing the Gentleman's Magazine, which contributed to the independence of his fortune, and is at present one of the most prosperous and lucrative periodical publications that literary history has upon record. Mr. Cave died in January, 1754, having just concluded his twenty-third annual collection; and his life was published in the above work, written by Dr. Johnson, to whom Mr. Cave was an early patron.

At COTON, in the parish of Church Over, about five miles north-east from Rugby, is a handsome stone mansion, the residence of Abraham Grimes, Esq. a descendant of the Dixwell family, anciently lords of this place, who resided here in a venerable mansion, which is now taken down. The present mansion is called *Coton House*, and is situated on an eminence commanding delightful and extensive prospects over this county and that of Northampton.

In the church at Church Over, are several monuments to the memory of the Dixwell family.

On the Roman road, called the Watling-street, are considerable remains of a tumulus.

WOLSTON or WOLFRICHSTON, a pleasant and large village, is situated on the bank of the Avon, about seven miles from Rugby. At this place was an alien priory, cell to the abbey of St. Peter, super

Divam, in Normandy, from which it was sold by the abbot and convent of that monastery, in the reign of Richard the second, to the carthusian priory, near Coventry.

The church at Wolston is in the form of a cross, and was built at different periods; Dugdale conjectured that the tower was erected soon after the conquest. On the south side there is a round-headed door way that appears very ancient, and probably belonged to a church mentioned by Dugdale to have stood here in the time of the Saxons. In the interior of the church there are three stone recesses, that were used by the priests during the performance of high mass.

At this place is a mansion called *Wolston Hall*, the seat of Mrs. Scott, which is very commodious and has beautiful pleasure grounds.

In this parish, near the Fosse-way, are some remains of a Roman encampment.

At BRANDON, a hamlet in the parish of Wolston, was formerly a castle, but by whom it was built is not known. It was destroyed by the adherents of Simon Montfort, Earl of Leicester, in consequence of its owner, John de Verdon, raising some troops for Henry the third to assist in opposing those rebels, who made Kenilworth castle their principal fortress. After this demolition, Theobald de Verdon is supposed to have rebuilt the castle; but

the only remains, at present, are a few fragments of the walls.

At BRETFORD, also a hamlet in the parish of Wolston, was a cell of black nuns, founded by Geoffrey de Clinton in the reign of Henry the second. The sisters, however, soon separated, and, by the consent of the founder, their lands were annexed to Kenilworth priory. Bretford also possessed a kind of hospital or chapel, dedicated to St. Edmund.

Journey from Rugby, through Brinklow and by Combe Abbey, to Coventry.

At the distance of about two miles from Rugby, we pass through the village of NEWBOLD-UPON-AVON, in which parish, at LITTLE LAWFORD, was formerly a mansion belonging to the Boughton family; but about twenty years ago it was levelled with the ground, in consequence of the untimely death of Sir Theodosius E. A. Boughton, Bart. who was poisoned, as is supposed, by Captain Donellan, who had married his sister, and for which crime, the Captain suffered the usual sentence of the law at Warwick, though he persisted in his innocence to the last moment of his existence. The manor of Little Lawford was purchased at the time the mansion belonging to the Boughton family was taken down by John Caldecote, Esq. who has since erected on it a handsome mansion.

About a mile from Newbold-upon-Avon, we pass through the village of NEWNHAM REGIS, or KING's NEWNHAM, so called, according to Dugdale, on account of its having formerly belonged to the King. In this parish, a short distance from the

village, is a bath, which is supplied by a spring of medicinal water, formerly of considerable celebrity; and at present, were there suitable accommodations, no doubt would have many visitors, as the village is very pleasantly situated. The water is strongly impregnated with allum, and it is observed of it, that being drank with salt it is laxative, but with sugar astringent. Walter Bailey, physician to Queen Elizabeth, published in 1582, a discourse on the virtues of this water.

Sir Francis Leigh, owner of this manor in the reign of Charles the first, was a strict adherent to that monarch, by whom he was made a baron, by the title of Lord Dunsmore, aud afterwards created Earl of Chichester. He was buried at this place in 1653.

The tower belonging to the church at Newnham Regis, which is over-grown with clustering ivy, presents a very picturesque appearance, as it is the only part of that building now remaining entire. The seats in the interior of this church are mentioned by Dr. Thomas to have been very handsome, and the walls to have been ornamented by paintings in fresco.—The burial-place is now converted into a rick-yard.

Leaving Newnham Regis, and at the distance of about a mile and a half, we arrive at BRINKLOW, a place, previous to the reformation, of considerable consequence. It derives its name, according to Dugdale, from a tumulus or low, which perhaps

was placed on the edge or *brink* of the natural hill at this place, which commands fine prospects of the adjacent country.

At Brinklow there was anciently a castle, the watch tower of which stood upon the before-mentioned tumulus. No remains of this castle are at present visible. Nicholas Stuteville, who possessed it in the reign of King John, obtained a grant of a weekly market on Monday, and an annual fair to be held here; the market, however, probably fell into disuse previous to the reign of Henry the third, as in that reign Stephen de Segrave obtained a charter for a weekly market on the Tuesday: the market and fair are now both discontinued.

The Fosse-way passes through Brinklow, and on it are the vestiges of an encampment.

MONK's KIRBY, situated about three miles from Brinklow, belonged, before the Norman conquest, to Leuvinus, a Saxon, but afterwards was given, by William the conqueror, to Geoffrey de Wirce, one of his followers, who made a large grant of lands and tithes in this and other adjacent lordships, to the monastery of St. Nicholas, at Angiers, the principal city of Anjou. In consequence of this grant, the abbey at Angiers sent some of their monks to found a cell to their convent at this place, and from this circumstance it received the appellation of Monk's Kirby.

In the reign of Henry the third, the monks obtained a charter for a weekly market and an annual fair to be held here.

It appears from history, that whenever our monarchs were at war with France, they seized upon the revenues of the alien priories; and this did not escape—its revenues being seized in the reigns of Edward the first and Edward the third. These seizures putting the monks to much inconvenience, and the superior house at Angiers finding that no profit accrued to them from their cell here, gave up their interest in it on moderate terms, in the reign of Richard the second, to Thomas Mowbray, Earl of Nottingham, who annexed it to a carthusian monastery near Epworth, in Lincolnshire, which he had just founded. At that time its revenue was valued at £220 3 4 per annum.

In the reign of Henry the fourth this priory again became the property of the monks at Angiers, but it did not continue long in their possession, as in the next reign it was again given to the carthusian monastery at Epworth, to which it continued till the dissolution. This manor, with the appurtenances, after the dissolution, was granted to the Duke of Suffolk; and now, by purchase, belongs to the Earl of Denbigh. The rectory of Monk's Kirby, with the tithes and rents of certain lands of the villages adjacent, were granted, by Henry the eighth, to trinity college, Cambridge.

The church at Monk's Kirby was built by the afore-mentioned Geoffrey de Wirce, soon after the conquest; it is a very extensive building, and formerly had a remarkably high spire, but about two centuries ago twenty feet of it were taken down to save the expense of repairing it. The church contains many monuments, and in the tower is an excellent peal of bells.

Many Roman antiquities have been found in a field near the church, as foundations of old walls, Roman bricks, &c. which caused Dugdale to conjecture that the Romans had a station here.

At NEWNHAM PADOX, in the parish of Monk's Kirby, is the noble mansion of the Earl of Denbigh, to which is attached a finely wooded park of considerable magnitude. The interior of the mansion is adorned with many excellent paintings, chiefly portraits, from the pencils of old masters.

Newbold Hall, the seat of Lady Skipwith, is also in this parish.

The Roman Fosse-way passes through the parish of Monk's Kirby, on the west side of which is *Cloudesley Bush,* a tumulus or artificial mount of earth, which probably covers the remains of some Roman hero. There is a *bush* on its summit, but a much larger one is supposed to have been there formerly.

At WIBTOFT, a short distance from Monk's Kirby, on the borders of the county, is said to have

stood the flourishing Roman city called *Cleychester*, which is described by Dugdale to have had scarcely any vestige remaining in his time, "the very foundations," he observes, "having been for the most part turned up by the plough and spade; and large stones, Roman bricks, with ovens and wells; nay, coins of silver and brass, mixed with its ruins, frequently discovered; the earth, so far as it extended, being of a darker colour than the rest thereabouts; and of such rankness, that much of it hath been carried by the husbandman to further distances, like dung, to make the ground more fertile."

About five miles from Brinklow the two great Roman roads, Watling-street and the Fosse-way, intersect each other, which place is called *High Cross*, from an eminent cross anciently erected here. This spot is supposed by some to be the most elevated ground in England, as from hence rivers run every way. In 1712, a pole only supplying the place of the ancient cross, Basil, Earl of Denbigh, and some gentlemen in the neighbourhood, erected here a handsome pillar, but of mouldering stone, through the deceit of the architect. It consisted of four Doric columns, regarding the four roads, with a gilded globe and cross at top, upon a sun-dial. On two sides, between the columns, were placed latin inscriptions, of which the following is a translation:—

"The noblemen and gentlemen, ornaments of the neighbouring counties of Warwick and Leicester, at the instance of the Right Honourable Basil, Earl of Denbigh, have caused this pillar to be erected, in grateful as well as perpetual remembrance of PEACE at last restored by her Majesty Queen Anne, in the year of our Lord 1712."

On the other side:

"If, traveller, you search for the footsteps of the ancient Romans, here you may behold them. For here their celebrated military ways, crossing one another, extend to the utmost boundaries of Britain. Here the Vennones kept their quarter; and, at the distance of one mile from hence, Claudius, a certain commander of a cohort, seems to have had a camp towards the street, and towards the Foss a tomb."

Our road, immediately on leaving Brinklow for Coventry, passes on the side of the plantations and park of the Earl of Craven; and at the distance of about three miles the mansion of the above nobleman, called *Combe Abbey*, appears in view. This mansion was formerly a monastery for monks of the cistercian order. Richard de Camville, who lived in the reign of King Stephen, the possessor of the lands here, being a pious man, granted this lordship, then called Smite, to the abbot and convent of Waverley, in Surrey, to found an abbey for monks

of the cistercian order, which was called Combe from its low situation. This abbey had numerous privileges conferred upon it, and received many benefactions; but, after subsisting four hundred years, it was dissolved with the other monasteries by Henry the eighth. Its annual revenue, at that period, was £302 15 3, according to Dugdale; but, according to Speed, £343 0 5.

This religious foundation was granted by Edward the sixth to John Dudley, Earl of Warwick, after whose attainder, it was leased to Robert Kelway, surveyor of the court of wards and liveries, by the marriage of whose daughter it passed to John Harrington, Esq. afterwards Lord Harrington. On the death of this nobleman it passed to his son, who dying without issue, it became the property of Lucy, Countess of Bedford, his sister, owing to whose extravagance it was sold to Sir William Craven, Knight, ancestor of the present noble owner. Mr. Pennant observes in his "Journey from Chester to London," "that accomplished nobleman Lord Harrington was the re-founder of this house; which, Camden says, arose from the ashes of the ancient abbey. His taste is evident, in his preservation of the venerable cloisters. It is indebted to the owners of the present name for its instructive furniture of portraits; probably entirely to the hero William Craven, a most distinguished personage of his family."

This William Lord Craven, above referred to, took a particular interest in the unfortunate Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia, eldest daughter of James the first; and after her husband had lost his crown, many English gentlemen attempted in vain to reinstate him in his possessions. Elizabeth was a most beautiful woman, and Mr. Pennant observes, "The English volunteers seem to have fought her battles, inspired by love. She was the admiration of the camp, and had votaries among every nation. The young Craven was among her warmest devotees, and continued his attachment to the last moment of her life; possessed her deserved confidence, directed all her affairs, and gave a most distinguished proof of his esteem, by building for her use, at his estate in Berkshire, a magnificent palace. The difference of rank alone prevented the publication of their union, which is generally supposed to have taken place. Her spotless fame was never aspersed with improper connection!" At her death she left her collection of pictures to Lord Craven.

The present magnificent mansion, called Combe Abbey, was erected, as before observed, by Lord Harrington on the ruins of the ancient abbey, but considerable additions and improvements have been made by the successive owners. The venerable cloisters are preserved on three sides of the ancient court, glazed as when occupied by the ancient owners,

and the sides of the walls hung with antlers, and other emblems of ancient times. There are many splendid rooms in the interior of the mansion, beautified by a very extensive and superb collection of valuable paintings.

To this mansion is attached a fine park of five hundred acres, well stocked with deer, richly wooded, and adorned by a noble piece of water, which covers a hundred acres.

Continuing our journey, and at the distance of five miles from Brinklow, we pass through the small village of BINLEY, where is a handsome church, erected by the Earl of Craven, and first opened for religious worship in 1772. The roof is richly ornamented with medallions, illustrative of scripture history, and the east window is filled with fine painted glass, by Mr. Peckett, representing a holy family.

At Binley was born in 1645, *Thomas Wagstaffe*, who was educated at the charter house, and new inn hall, Oxford; and after he had taken orders, obtained Martinsthorp rectory, in Rutlandshire, and in 1684 was made chancellor of Lichfield, and rector of St. Margaret Pattens, London. At the revolution he was deprived of his preferments, and practised physic for some years. In 1693 he was consecrated suffragan bishop of Thetford, and died in 1712, aged 62. He published several sermons, and an able vindication of Charles the first.

About two miles from Binley, we arrive at COVENTRY, a very ancient and populous city, distant 92 miles from London, 10 from Warwick, and 18 from Birmingham.

At a distance this city has a noble appearance, being situated on gently elevated ground, the three spires of its churches towering from the midst of surrounding buildings, having a grand effect. The approaches to the city are mean and bad; the streets in general are narrow, and composed of very ancient buildings; and the upper stories of some of the houses project so much at top as almost to exclude the light and impede a free circulation of the air. Mr. Pennant observes, in his "Journey from Chester to London," "By the appearance of the whole, it is very evident that it never underwent the calamity of fire; which, deprecated as it ought to be, is usually the cause of future improvement." The spirit of improvement has, however, begun to take place, and a new wide street, called Hertford-street, has been recently formed at the entrance of the town from Warwick, and some of the modern houses in the city are large and handsome.

Coventry is supposed to have existed in the time of the Britons, but the exact period of its foundation is unknown. The latter part of its name is conjectured to be derived from the British *Tre*, signifying a town; and to this the Saxons prefixed the word

Coven (Convent,) from a nunnery very anciently established here. The scite of the ancient town is supposed to have been on the north side of the present city, as extensive foundations have been discovered near the spot called St. Nicholas's church-yard.

Sir William Dugdale, on the authority of Rous, his predecessor as Warwickshire antiquary, states, that when the traitor Edric ravaged the kingdom of Mercia, in 1016, he burnt the nunnery at Coventry, of which a holy virgin, named St. Osburg, had been abbess. Leland mentions that this convent was founded by King Canute.

In the early part of the reign of Edward the confessor, Leofric, the fifth Earl of Mercia, and his Countess Godiva, founded a monastery for benedictine monks on the ruins of the destroyed monastery of St. Osburg. Leofric was a nobleman of great talent and power, and was in high favour with King Canute, who made him captain-general of his forces. On the death of Canute he was instrumental in advancing Harold, son of that King, to the throne; he also assisted in raising Edward the confessor to the crown, and defending him from the turbulent intrigues of Earl Godwin. Leofric married Godiva, a beautiful and devout lady, sister to Thorold, sheriff of Lincolnshire and founder of Spalding abbey. At that time Coventry laboured under an intolerable

load of taxes;* and the Countess, who bore a singular affection to this place, often earnestly besought her husband that he would free it from the grievous servitude to which it was subject. He, however, on account of the profit that accrued to him from the taxes, long resisted her importunity; but, at length, to free himself from her solicitations, he told her if she would ride naked on horseback, from one end of the town to the other, in sight of all the people, he would grant her request. On an appointed day, therefore, she mounted on horseback naked, with her hair loose, which is recorded to have been so long that it covered her whole body, even to her feet; and, thus covered in her lovely tresses, she performed the task, and returned with joy to her husband, who immediately granted a charter of freedom to the city. This history was preserved in a picture of the Earl and Countess, set up in a south window of Trinity church, about the reign of Richard the second. The Earl was represented bearing a charter of freedom in his right hand, and thus addressing his lady:—

"I Lurick (Leofric) for the love of thee,
Doe make Coventry toll-free."

* The great lords to whom the towns belonged, under the Anglo-Saxons, had the privilege of imposing taxes on the inhabitants, which at present cannot be exercised by any but the House of Commons.

According to Rapin, the Countess, previous to her ride, commanded all persons to keep within their houses, and on no account to appear at their windows, on pain of death; but the curiosity of a poor tailor was so great that he could not forbear taking a peep, which, however, cost him his life. This circumstance is commemorated to the present day by a large figure, called *Peeping Tom*,* looking out of a window, or a niche in the wall, at the corner of Hertford-street.

The love of Godiva to this city is annually commemorated by a numerous and elegant procession in trinity week, on which day an annual fair commences, which lasts for eight days, and in this procession a lovely fair one rides, not literally like the good Countess, but in linen closely fitted to her shape, and of a colour resembling her complexion.

Most historians writing of Coventry, since the time of Matthew of Westminster, 1307, mention the foregoing singular and romantic exploit of Lady

* "On a minute examination of this figure it is found to be a very ancient full-length oak statue of a man in armour, with an helmet on his head, greaves on his legs, and sandals on his feet; to favour the posture of his leaning out of window, the arms have been cut off at the elbows. From the attitude in which it was originally carved, there is reason to believe, that it was either intended for Mars, the fabulous god of war, or some other warlike chieftain. It is absurd to suppose, that the figure was ever exhibited in this habit and situation, to resemble a mechanic; his wig and long neckcloth are characteristic of the reign of Charles II. for before the Restoration, long perukes were not worn in this kingdom."---*History of Coventry*.

and the Duke of Norfolk for life, which so affected that nobleman that he retired to Venice, where he died broken hearted. The consequences of this combat were, however, in the end, fatal to the weak and imprudent Richard; for Hereford returned before the period of his banishment was expired, and deprived him of his crown, and ultimately of his life.

In 1404, Henry the fourth held a parliament in the great chamber of the priory, in this city. It was stiled *Parliamentum Indoctorum*, "not," says Mr. Pennant, "that it consisted of a greater number of blockheads than parliaments ordinarily do; but from its inveteracy against the clergy, whose revenues it was determined not to spare; whence it was called the *Laymen's Parliament*."

King Henry the sixth and his heroic Queen, Margaret, paid many visits to Coventry, to which they seem to have been much attached; and the King, in 1451, bestowed a signal mark of his favour upon it, by erecting it, with several villages round, into a county of itself, which should be thenceforth called the *County of the City of Coventry*. By this charter it was ordered, that the bailiffs should from that time act as sheriffs; the coroner of the city should likewise preside over the county; that the mayor should be clerk of the market and steward of the King's household; and that the citizens should

be free from tolls for their merchandize throughout England and Ireland, and enjoy all the privileges possessed by their predecessors.

In 1459, another parliament was held in this city, by Henry the sixth, in the chapter house of the priory, which was called *Parliamentum Diabolicum*, on account of the numerous attainders passed against Richard Duke of York, and the partizans of the white rose. However, in a subsequent parliament, all these attainders were reversed by the Yorkists.

In 1470, Richard Neville, *the King-making Earl of Warwick*, having forsook the party of the Yorkists, arrived at Coventry from London on Middle-Lent Sunday, bringing with him some ordnance and other warlike stores; and, during his continuance there, Edward the fourth approached the city, and attempted to enter it from Gosford green, but being refused admittance by the citizens he retreated to Warwick. After he had annihilated the Lancasterian party by the victories of Barnet and Tewkesbury, he did not forget this insult, and in revenge deprived the citizens of their privileges, and took the sword from the mayor; and they were obliged to pay five hundred marks for the restoration of their liberties and the sword.

In 1519, the Bishop of Chester condemned seven men and women to be burnt at Coventry, charged with the *horrible crime* of having in their possession

"the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments."

It is recorded, that the dissolution of monasteries had such an effect on this city, and trade grew so exceedingly low in consequence, that, in the third of Edward the sixth, it was represented to the Duke of Somerset, Lord Protector of England, by John Hales, Esq. that there were not at that time above three thousand inhabitants in Coventry, though within memory there had been fifteen thousand! As a remedy for this evil, King Edward granted a charter to the city for an additional fair.

Leland thus mentions Coventry in his "Itinerary," written in the reign of Henry the eighth. "The town of Coventrye by west is set on a low ground, but by east it somewhat *condescendeth.* It was begun to be wallid in the reign of Edward II. and has six gates, and many fair towers. It is but a late ago since the walls were finished. There be many fair streets, well builded with timber. There be divers fair suburbs without the walls. The King hath a palace there, now somewhat in ruin. The town rose by making of cloth and cappes; which now decaying, the glory of the city also decayeth."

When the civil war commenced between King Charles the first and his parliament, after that monarch had erected his standard at Nottingham, in 1641, he proceeded to Leicester, and sent an herald

at arms to demand an entrance into Coventry; but the citizens, with many expressions of affection, answered, that they would willingly receive his Majesty and two hundred of his followers, but no more. The King, incensed at this treatment, planted his ordnance against the city and forced open one of the gates, but was vigorously repulsed by the citizens with some loss; and hearing that Lord Brooke was approaching with an army from London, he drew off his forces. Soon after, Coventry was regularly garrisoned for the parliament, and many additions made to its fortifications, and it continued in the possession of parliament during the war.

Coventry was an open city for a long series of years, and it was not till 1355 that its *Walls* were begun, by virtue of a license from Edward the third, granted twenty-seven years before; nor were they entirely finished till the reign of Richard the second—the expenses were defrayed chiefly by taxes upon the inhabitants. These walls, which contributed so much to the importance of the city, were of vast strength and grandeur; they were three miles in circumference, strengthened by thirty-two towers, and furnished with twelve gates. At the restoration, Charles the second, in revenge for the insult offered by the citizens to his father, determined on their demolition; he, therefore, sent a commission for them to be rased to the ground to the Earl of Northampton, who, on July 22, 1662, accompanied by some

of the neighbouring gentry, and attended by the county troops, began the demolition. Nearly five hundred men were employed on this work for three weeks and three days, when greater part of the walls, most of the towers, and some of the gates, were demolished. Many of the gates, however, were not taken down, and continued in being till within the last half century.

Coventry has been visited by various pestilences, and they were to a dreadful extent in 1350, 1564, 1574, 1578, 1603, and 1625. In the last-mentioned year it appears to have been exceedingly alarming, as many of the citizens "retired to houses in the Grey Friars' orchard, and near Quinton pool in the park."

We now, having, we hope, given our readers sufficient information respecting the early history and circumstances relative to Coventry, unconnected with its public buildings, shall give an account of them; and as the *Churches*, which are three in number, are, from the high stile of elegance in which they are finished, the first objects that deserve the attention of the stranger, we shall commence with them.

St. Michael's Church.—This magnificent Gothic structure, the steeple of which is esteemed one of the most beautiful in Europe, was originally founded

in 1133, in the reign of Henry the first, and was given to the monks of Coventry, in the reign of Stephen, by Ralph, Earl of Chester, by the name of the chapel of St. Michael. The body of the present church is supposed to have been erected in the reign of Henry the sixth; but its most ancient part is the steeple, begun in 1373 and finished in 1395, by two brothers, named Adam and William Botoner, who were several times mayors of Coventry, and who are said to have expended on this work a hundred pounds per annum, for twenty-two years. The height of the steeple and length of the church are the same, three hundred and three feet. It commences in a square tower, one hundred and thirty-six feet three inches high, and is enriched on the sides with niches, in the upper part of which are thirty figures of saints. From the tower rises an octagon, supported by eight springing arches from the pinnacles, remarkable for their light and graceful architecture; and from within the battlements of the octagon rises a most elegant spire, one hundred and thirty feet six inches high, which, for its embellishments and fine proportion, is well entitled to the eulogium of Sir Christopher Wren, who pronounced it to be a master-piece of art. The interior of the church is very grand, consisting of a nave and two side aisles, divided by rows of lofty clustered pillars and arches. The ceiling is of oak, curiously ribbed and carved, and the upper range of windows are adorned with ancient painted glass, representing a variety of scrip-

tural subjects. The altar-piece is very curiously decorated with beautiful paintings, and the organ is an excellent one. The steeple contains a ring of ten bells, and a set of musical chimes. In the church are numerous fine ancient and modern monuments.

Trinity Church.—This noble edifice is situated in the immediate vicinity of St. Michael's. It is built in the form of a cross, with a square tower in the centre, from which issues a fine lofty spire. Mr. Pennant observes, that "this would be spoken of as a most beautiful building, was it not eclipsed by its unfortunate vicinity to St. Michael's." The ancient spire of this church was blown down in 1664, and the present one, which is in height, to the top of the weathercock, two hundred and thirty-seven feet, was finished in 1667. The interior of this church presents a sombre Gothic appearance, and contains but few monuments; among them, however, on the south wall of the choir, is a tablet that will not be passed unnoticed,—this is to the memory of *Dr. Philemon Holland*, the celebrated English translator; with his arms, and a latin inscription written by himself. Dr. Holland was born at Chelmsford, and was a physician and schoolmaster in Coventry. He was the translator-general of his age, and acquired great credit by his fidelity; though he had but very little of the fire of genius. His translations were so numerous, that it has been said they would make a library of themselves: the most valuable among them is "Camden's Britannica," which was performed in

that eminent antiquary's life-time, by his consent. Dr. Holland wrote a large folio volume with one pen, which he informs us was not worn out; and it seems he took a pride in this circumstance, as he composed the following verse on the occasion:—

"With one sole pen I wrote this book,
Made of a grey-goose quill;
A pen it was when I it took,
A pen I leave it still."

It appears that Dr. Holland, in the latter part of his life, became impaired in his circumstances, as he received an allowance from the corporation. He died in 1636.

In this church, and also in St. Michael's, there were formerly several chantries.

St. John's Church.—This church was originally a chapel to the merchants' gild, the most ancient in Coventry, and the land on which it is erected was granted by Queen Isabel, mother of Edward the third, for building a chapel to the honour of our Saviour and St. John the Baptist, in which masses were to be sung daily, and it was finished and dedicated in 1350. The merchants' gild being afterwards united with those of Trinity and St. Catharine, maintained a warden and eight priests, a master of the grammar school, clerks and choristers. At the dissolution, its revenue was valued at £111 13 8 per annum. This church was made a rectory, by act of parliament, in 1734, at which time it was

repaired and new pewed. It is a stone structure, in the form of a cross, with a heavy square tower, rising from its centre. The interior of the church presents rather a gloomy appearance, occasioned by four massive pillars that support the tower, and the windows are high, forming a long range, with very narrow divisions.

Near this church formerly stood a very magnificent entrance into the city, called *Spon Gate*, which, being no longer useful for the purposes of war, and inconvenient on account of the lowness of the gateway, was taken down about the middle of the last century. A plate of it is preserved in "Pennant's Journey from Chester to London."

There are meeting-houses in Coventry for the different denominations of Protestant Dissenters; and a Roman Catholic chapel.

The Priory.—The famous Saxon nunnery that stood in this city having, as before-mentioned, been destroyed by Edric, when he ravaged the kingdom of Mercia, Earl Leofric and his Countess amply repaired the destruction, by founding in its stead, a magnificent monastery, for monks of the Benedictine order.—It was most richly endowed by Earl Leofric, with one half of the city of Coventry and twenty-four lordships in this county, by the advice of Edward the confessor and the reigning Pope; and the church was dedicated to the honour of God, the Virgin Mary, St. Peter, St. Osburg, and All Saints. The noble

founders, Earl Leofric, who died in 1057, and his Countess Godiva, the time of whose death is not known, were buried, according to the custom of the times, in the porches of the church.

The first abbot was Leofrine, but this dignity continued only a short time, for Robert de Limesie, Bishop of Chester, having obtained this monastery of King Henry the first, constituted it the capital cathedral of that diocese; in consequence of which the office of abbot was suppressed, the Bishop being in such cases always esteemed supreme of the house. A prior was appointed instead of the abbot, but the honour of the house was not impaired, for the priors were barons in parliament, as well as the preceding abbots, and it was denominated a mitred abbey.—According to William of Malmsbury, this monastery was enriched and beautified with so much gold and silver, that the walls seemed too narrow to contain it, and the rapacious Robert de Limesie before-mentioned, scraped from a single beam that supported the shrine, five hundred marks of silver. This prelate also suffered the buildings of the convent to go to decay, and kept the monks in ignorance and poverty.

In the reign of King Stephen, Robert Marmion, Lord of Tamworth castle, an enemy to the Earl of Chester, forcibly took possession of this priory, turned out the monks, and fortified the church and the adjoining buildings. He also caused deep trenches to be made in the fields adjacent, which

were covered so as they could not be seen, that they might be an impediment to an enemy, should any attempt to approach; but, some time after, the Earl of Chester drawing near with some forces, Marmion sallied out at the head of his troops, and forgetting the places where the trenches were dug, he fell with his horse into one of them himself; and being discovered by a private soldier of the Earl of Chester's, he was immediately slain. After the death of Marmion, the monks were restored.

In the latter end of the reign of Henry the second, Hugh Novant, a Norman by birth, became Bishop of this diocese, and had also a grant of the priory; this, however, he did not possess till the reign of Richard the first. This prelate determined to eject the monks, and place secular canons in their room; but finding the monks disposed to resist him, he proceeded there at the head of an armed force, when a conflict ensued, in which the Bishop received a wound on the head, with a holy cross, near the high altar. A complaint was, in consequence, made to the Bishop of Ely, the Pope's legate, that the monks had shed the blood of the Bishop, even before the high altar; he, therefore, immediately ordered the monks to be expelled and secular canons placed in their room; and the Pope gave his sanction to what his legate had done. In 1198, Bishop Novant lying on his death-bed, was struck with remorse at the injury he had committed against the monks, and

implored with deep contrition their forgiveness; and Pope Innocent the third, at the petition of one of the expelled monks, who was then at Rome, reinstated them in their convent. After this, the monks enjoyed a long career of prosperity, and had a number of valuable privileges granted to them. At the dissolution, in the reign of Henry the eighth, the revenues of this priory amounted to £731 19 5 per annum; and on the surrender of it, in 1538, the prior had an annual pension granted him of £133 6 8, and the monks had also pensions.

This priory stood on the south side of the Sherbourn brook, and it was ordered to be taken down by Henry the eighth, in the thirtieth year of his reign. The scite is mostly converted into garden ground; and the only visible remains of the priory are some fragments of the walls, and at the end of the buildings that face the brook are several door cases.

The Cathedral of Coventry stood in a place called Hill-close, on a gentle declivity from the north side of St. Michael's and Trinity church yards. Mr. Pennant observes, "When the cathedral was standing, Coventry possessed a matchless group of churches, all standing within one cemetery." This cathedral is mentioned to have been built on the model of that at Lichfield, and was equally beautiful. It was levelled to the ground by order of Henry the eighth, when the priory was demolished, though

Rowland Lee, Bishop of this diocese, who is said to have been one of that monarch's most servile tools, made many strong and earnest entreaties that it might not be demolished; but his prayers were disregarded. At the western end of Hill-close a large and stately arch was remaining till about half a century ago, when it fell into ruins; and the only vestige now discernible of this once splendid cathedral, is a small fragment, constituting part of a private house. In 1776, part of the scite of the cathedral was re-consecrated as a burial place for Trinity parish.

The Bishop's Palace stood at the north-east corner of St. Michael's church yard; it was sold during the civil war, in the reign of Charles the first, for one hundred guineas, and rased to the ground for its materials.

The Grey Friars.—The monastery belonging to these friars stood on the south side of the city; they settled here about the year 1234, and being successful in obtaining the contributions of the pious and charitable, they founded a church and monastery on ground given them by Ranulph, Earl of Chester, out of his manor of Cheylesmore. The remains of the church consist of a beautiful steeple, with a spire springing from an octagon. The lower part of the tower is now used as a tool house, and the scite of the church-yard and monastery is occupied as garden ground. No remains are visible of the habitable part of this religious house.

The White Friars.—The house belonging to the Carmelite or White Friars, stood at the east end of the city. These, like their brethren the Grey Friars, were devoted to poverty, and rejected all endowments of lands; but they subsisted on the alms of pious persons, and legacies were frequently left them as expiations for sins. They settled here about the year 1342, and their house was built by Sir John Poultney, four times Lord Mayor of London.—A church was standing in the middle of the sixteenth century that had belonged to these friars, but it was soon after that period taken down, and the materials being obtained by Mr. Edward Boughton, he erected with them, at Causton, a hamlet in the parish of Dunchurch, a mansion, which, says Dugdale, was "the most beautiful fabric that was in all these parts."

At the dissolution the clear annual value of the property belonging to the white friars amounted only to £7 13 8. The house was granted to Sir Ralph Sadler, from whom it passed by purchase to John Hales, Esq. who converted it into a mansion, where he entertained Queen Elizabeth for two days in 1665. This mansion was purchased in 1801 by the directors of the poor of Coventry, who converted it into a *House of Industry* for the united parishes of St. Michael and the Holy Trinity. Considerable remains of the monastic edifice are still to be seen, and one side of the cloister, now used as an eating room for the poor, is in a good state of preservation.—

A handsome gateway, which formed the entrance to the mansion constructed by Mr. Hales, and the dormitory and refectory also remain. In addition to the ancient remains, a substantial brick building has been erected for the better accommodation of the poor, and the whole affairs of the house are under the superintendance of eighteen directors.

St. Mary's Hall.—This is a venerable structure, situated a little south of St. Michael's church. It was erected in the reign of Henry the sixth, and was originally the banqueting room of the gilds: at present most of the civic business of the city is transacted in it, and it is also used for assemblies, &c. On a view of its exterior, the eye is struck with a noble spacious window, the lower half of which is filled with handsome niches, occupying the space between the mullions. The entrance is through a porch, with an arched roofing, on the key stone of which is a basso-relievo, representing God on his throne receiving the Virgin Mary. Beyond is a court yard, in which is a door leading into the large ancient kitchen; and a flight of stairs communicating with an open gallery, leads to the great hall, a splendid room sixty-three feet long and thirty wide. At the north end is a fine semicircular window, divided into nine compartments, adorned with several figures of our monarchs, and a number of coats of arms, and other ornaments. Beneath this window is a fine piece of ancient tapestry, thirty feet in length and ten feet in

height, representing Henry the sixth and his Queen Margaret, with the nobility of their court, and a number of male and female saints as large as life.—The windows on each side contain some fine ancient painted glass, representing various figures and armorial bearings; they are, however, much mutilated. The windows on the west side were also formerly filled with painted glass, but about half a century ago, they were re-glazed with plain glass. The sides of the walls are enriched by inscriptions and heraldic devices, and are adorned with many fine portraits. This room also contains a number of other curiosities, well worthy the attention of the stranger, but which our limits prevent us from minutely describing:—among these is a brass plate, at the lower end of the hall, with a curious inscription in old English characters, beneath which is a richly ornamented chair of state; at the same end of the hall is the minstrels gallery, where are to be seen several suits of armour, that were formerly worn by the attendants of the mayor when he proclaimed the great fair. Besides the great hall in this building, there are the Old and New Council Chambers, and the Mayoress's Parlour. The latter was formerly a fine Gothic apartment, but its venerable appearance is now entirely defaced, and the antique decorations are covered by a smooth finishing of lath and plaister.

The Drapers' Hall.—This building is situated a little below St. Mary's hall, and is a handsome

edifice, with a stone front, ornamented by Tuscan pilasters. It was built in 1775, on the scite of an ancient hall "founded by certain drapers who have long paid the debt of nature." In this hall, the concerts and dancing and card assemblies are generally held.

The County Hall.—This structure is situated opposite the west end of St. Michael's church; it is of stone, erected in 1785, and presents a handsome appearance. The assizes and quarter sessions for the city and county of Coventry are held in this building. Adjoining this hall is the *Gaol*, which was erected in 1772.

The Mayor's Parlour.—This is situated near the market-place, and here the mayor or one of the aldermen attends every day, except Fridays and Sundays, to administer justice, and most of the public business of the city is transacted in this building. The time of its erection is not known, but it was partly taken down and rebuilt in 1775.

The Barracks in Coventry, though not very extensive, are conveniently arranged. They were erected in 1793, and the front, which is of stone, faces the high-street.

Bablake Hospital.—This hospital is situated behind St. John's church, and is an ancient building nearly surrounding a small court. One part of this hospital is occupied by *Alms Houses*, founded in 1506, by Mr. Thomas Bond, a wealthy draper of

Coventry, for ten poor men and one poor woman. About the year 1619, John Johnson, one of the almsmen of this hospital, poisoned several of his brethren with ratsbane, five of whom instantly died, and three others were exceedingly ill. It is supposed that he was ambitious of becoming senior of the house, and, suspicion falling upon him, he poisoned himself in the same way; and his crime being discovered after he was buried, his body was taken from the grave and buried in the high-way, with the usual marks of infamy. There are at present belonging to this excellent institution, forty-two poor men, who receive four shillings each per week, and annually a gown, a hat, and several other benefits. Lodgings are also allowed those who choose to live in the hospital, and a nurse and servant reside with them to cook their provisions, &c.

The other part of this hospital is occupied as a *Charity School*, founded by the citizens of Coventry, in 1560, for the instruction and maintenance of poor boys. Among other benefactions this charity has received, very considerable property was bestowed upon it by Mr. Wheatley, of Coventry, owing to the following very singular circumstance:—Mr. Wheatley, who was an ironmonger and card maker, sent his servant into Spain to purchase some steel gads, which he did, as he thought, in open fair; but when the barrels arrived, they were found to contain cochineal and ingots of silver! Mr. Wheatley kept

them for a considerable time, in hopes of discovering the owner, as his servant was ignorant from whom he had purchased them; no enquiry, however, being made, he at length sold them, and applied the produce, with a considerable part of his own fortune, to charitable purposes. This school has also received many other benefactions, and its annual income is about five hundred pounds. The present number of boys in this institution are about 25, who are clothed in a livery of yellow and blue, and are maintained and instructed in all the useful branches of learning. At a proper age they each receive a new suit of clothes, and two pounds is allowed to put them out apprentices.

Grey Friar's Hospital.—This is a curious ancient building, and stands near the ruins of the grey friar's church. Its front is richly adorned with carved wood, in a good state of preservation. It was founded in 1592, by Mr. William Ford, of Coventry, and afterwards improved by his executor, Mr. William Pisford; many other persons have also proved benefactors to this charity, and it at present contains eighteen poor women, besides a nurse and two old men.

Spon Hospital.—On the western side of the city are the remains of Spon Hospital, founded in the reign of Henry the second, by Hugh, Earl of Chester, for persons afflicted with that loathsome disorder, the leprosy. The relics of this building

are part of the chapel and gateway, which are now converted into dwelling-houses.

The Free School.—This building is situated at the lower end of cross-cheaping, and was formerly the *Hospital of St. John*, founded in the reign of Henry the second, by Laurence, prior of Coventry, and his convent. At the dissolution, the hospital with its lands and possessions were granted to John Hales, Esq. who converted this foundation into a free school, and endowed it with two hundred marks per annum in landed property. The scholars were at first instructed in the white friar's church; but the magistrates, finding that though Mr. Hales had purchased the *land* that the church stood on he had not bought the *building*, obtained a grant of it from the crown, and had it rased to the ground; which obliged Mr. Hales to remove the scholars to the chapel of this hospital. This chapel, now reduced to a portion of one aisle, is the present school, and in it many learned men have received the rudiments of their education; among whom was the celebrated historian of this county, Sir William Dugdale. At present, however, we are sorry to observe, it is but very thinly attended, owing, it is said, to a dispute between the masters. The front of this school was taken down in 1794, and the present handsome one erected, which is in the pointed style of architecture.

Two Free Schools have been recently established in this city on the systems of Mr. Lancaster and Dr.

Bell, which are well supported; and there are also numerous *Sunday Schools.*

The Cross.—This celebrated structure—the admiration of antiquaries and ornament of the city—stood near the centre of the present corn market, which still bears the name. A cross was first erected here in 1423, but this was taken down and another begun in 1541, in pursuance of a request of Sir William Hollies, Lord Mayor of London, who left by his will two hundred pounds for that purpose. We perhaps cannot better describe this beautiful building than in the words of Mr. Pennant. "The base was hexangular, finely ornamented with Gothic sculpture; above rose three stories of most light and elegant tabernacle-work, lessening to the summit. In the niches were saints and English monarchs, from Henry II. to Henry V. and around each story, variety of pretty figures with flags, with the arms of England or the rose of Lancaster expressed on them: and, on the summit of the uppermost plate, Justice, and other gracious attributes." This cross was repaired by the citizens in 1629, when three hundred and twenty-three pounds were expended on it; and in 1669 it was again repaired at the expense of more than two hundred and fifty pounds. From the latter period this elegant fabric was entirely neglected, and suffered to fall into ruin; and in 1771 its remains were entirely taken away.

A Theatre, when we passed through Coventry, was being erected, and since this work has been

prepared for the press it has been finished, and was opened on Easter Monday.

Coventry gives the title of Earl to the noble family of Coventry, who reside at Croome Court, near Worcester. It returns two members to parliament, and the number of voters are about three thousand—the sheriffs are the returning officers. In conjunction with Lichfield it is the see of a Bishop: the diocese comprehends five hundred and fifty-seven parishes, being the whole of the counties of Stafford and Derby, except two parishes in the former; the greatest part of Warwickshire, and nearly half of Shropshire. Previous to the restoration, the Bishops styled themselves *Coventry and Lichfield;* but since that period they have uniformly followed the example of the learned Bishop Hacket, who gave the precedence to Lichfield, in consequence of the different parts taken by the two cities during the civil war, he being a strenuous royalist.

The Government of Coventry is vested in a mayor, ten aldermen (to each of whom a ward is assigned), and twenty common-councilmen. The mayor and aldermen are justices of the peace for the city and county of Coventry. The corporation hold quarter sessions in the same manner and with the same power as counties at large, and among their privileges they have the power of sitting in judgment on capital offences, but this important office, as they probably could not, either to themselves or the public, satis-

factorily perform, is always referred to the judge who travels the midland circuit.

Coventry has for a long period of time been distinguished as a manufacturing town. The manufacture of cloth was originally its staple trade, and continued till the war with France in 1694, by which the trade was ruined. In the early part of the sixteenth century, Coventry was famous for the manufacture of blue thread, which was so famous for its dye, that *True as Coventry blue* became a proverbial expression; but this art was lost before the close of that century. To this succeeded the manufacture of striped and mixed tammies, camblets, shalloons, calimancoes, &c. which, for a considerable time, employed a great number of the inhabitants; but within the last thirty years it has gradually dwindled away, and the principal manufactures at present are those of ribbons and watches. The manufacture of ribbons was introduced about a century ago, and it now is in a most flourishing state, giving employment to at least sixteen thousand persons in Coventry and the adjacent villages.

The Population of Coventry has varied considerably at different periods, and must of course be ever fluctuating; but the number of its inhabitants, in 1811, was stated to be 17,923.

Coventry derives much advantage from its navigable *Canals*, as merchandize can be conveyed by them to all parts of the kingdom. It has a well-

attended Market on Fridays; and Fairs on May 2, Friday in Trinity week, and November 1. The first and last continue three days each, and the second eight days, called the show fair, in which is the procession of Lady Godiva, before-mentioned.

Of EMINENT MEN born in Coventry, we shall enumerate a few of the principal.

Vincent of Coventry was born in this city, and flourished in 1250. He was the first of the Franciscans who considered academical study necessary to a religious habit, and he became a public professor in the university of Cambridge. He wrote "An Exposition of the Mass," "A Repetition of the Lessons," &c.

William Macklesfield, according to Bishop Godwin, was born in this city. He is said to have been a scholar of great celebrity, and was made general of the order of Dominicans; he was also made a cardinal by Pope Benedict the eleventh, with the title of St. Sabine; but before the arrival of his cardinal's hat he died, and the hat was fixed with much magnificence to the monument under which he was buried.

William of Coventry was born and bred a Carmelite in this city, and flourished in 1360. He was author of several ecclesiastical works; and, in consequence of his being afflicted with an incurable sprain in his hip, he was called *Claudius Conversus,* or the lame convert.

John Bird was born in this city, and bred a Carmelite at Oxford, and afterwards became the head and last provincial of his order. He courted the favour of Henry the eighth by preaching against the primacy of the Pope, and was successively preferred by that monarch to the bishoprics of Bangor and Chester; he, however, lost his bishopric in 1533, in consequence of his marriage, and died in 1556.

Humphry Wanley, son of Nathaniel Wanley, vicar of Trinity church, Coventry, and author of "The History of Man," &c. was born in 1671, and was first put apprentice to a handicraft trade, but proving to have a great taste for literature, he was sent to St. Edmund's Hall, Oxford, of which Dr. Mills was then principal, whom he greatly assisted in his collections of the New Testament. He was afterwards appointed librarian to the Earl of Oxford, in which situation he gave such satisfaction, that he was allowed a handsome pension by Lord Harley, the Earl's eldest son and successor in the title, who retained him as librarian till death. He travelled over the kingdom at the solicitation of Dr. Hickes, in search of Anglo-Saxon M.SS. and drew up the catalogue of them in that celebrated writer's "Thesaurus." Mr. Wanley gave to the free school in Coventry several valuable books, and died in 1726.

John Tipper, the original publisher of the Ladies' Diary, was born in this city, and in 1699, was chosen

master of the Bablake school. He wrote a poetical entertainment which was performed by the Bablake blue-coat boys in the mayor's parlour, June 27, 1706, being the thanksgiving day for the victories in Flanders and Spain. He first published the Ladies' Diary in 1704, and continued it till his death in 1713. He also intended to have published a History of Coventry, but died before his materials were arranged.

Within the manor of CHEYLESMORE, on the south side of the city of Coventry, was anciently a castle, the residence of the Earls of Chester, to which was annexed a large park, well stocked with deer.—This castle was taken by surprise by King Stephen, from Ranulph (commonly called Gernons,) Earl of Chester, who had taken part with the Empress Maud. The Earl in consequence erected a strong fort near it, in order to reduce the garrison by cutting off their supplies of provisions; the King attempted to relieve the garrison, at first unsuccessfully, as many of his men were slain and himself wounded; but at length he succeeded in defeating the Earl, who was desperately wounded; and then demolished the castle.—After the destruction of the castle, a manor house was erected on the same situation, some remains of which, connected with tenements built on its scite, are still visible. The park of Cheylesmore was about three miles in circumference, and was possessed by the present Prince of Wales, as Duke of Cornwall;

but, some years ago, it was sold under the authority of parliament, for the redemption of the land-tax, to the Marquis of Hertford, who is the present owner. It is now enclosed, and great part of it is laid out in gardens.

In the immediate vicinity of Coventry, on the south-east side, formerly stood a monastery, called the *Charter House*, founded by William Lord Zouch, of Harringworth, in Northamptonshire, and others, for monks of the Carthusian order. Richard the second, in 1385, laid the first stone of the church belonging to this religious house, and afterwards was very liberal in his endowments to the monastery.—At the dissolution its revenues were valued at £131 6 8 per annum, above all reprises. Very little now remains of this monastery, as all is destroyed except the wall which formed the outward boundary; and in the garden of Edward Inge, Esq. who resides in a handsome house built on the scite of this establishment, are marks of several small doors, that were the entrances into the dreary cells of those religious recluses.

About a mile and a half from Coventry, near the London road, on a gentle ascent, is a venerable mansion called *Whitley Hall*, the seat of Lord Hood, commanding pleasing and extensive prospects.—Charles the first is said to have fixed his station here previous to his ineffectual attempt to gain possession of Coventry in 1642.

At HAWKSBURY, near Coventry, is a pleasant mansion, the residence of Francis Parrot, Esq. surrounded by flourishing plantations.

About two miles from Coventry, on the road leading to Birmingham, is the pleasant village of ALLESLEY, anciently a member of Coventry, and its church was originally a chapel belonging to the priory in that city. The church is a handsome Gothic structure, built in the reign of Henry the first, and has a neat spire, rising from a low square tower. At this place, according to Dr. Thomas, was formerly a castle, "which seems," says that learned writer, "to have been double moated about; in the innermost moat was found a well, steined about with stone five foot deep, which being cleansed, proves an admirable spring, and serves the house and offices. By the side of the well, there was a stone trough, with five several holes with bits of leaden pipes in them, which formerly conveyed the water five several ways." This castle, it appears, was the residence of the Hasting family, anciently lords of this manor. Allesley is now ornamented by a handsome mansion, the seat of James Beck, Esq.

At STIVICHALL, about two miles from Coventry, is a handsome stone mansion, the seat of Francis Gregory, Esq. This gentleman has had the old church at this place, built in the reign of Elizabeth, taken down; and erected a new one, chiefly at his own expense, which is a very pleasing structure.

About a mile and a half from Stivichall, and three and a half from Coventry, is the village of BAGINTON, which takes its name from Sir William Bagot, one of the favourites of the unfortunate Richard the second, who resided in a castle here. There were but slight remains of this edifice in the time of Dugdale, and at present only a single fragment of the wall is left to mark its scite. At this castle the Duke of Hereford lodged previous to his intended combat with the Duke of Norfolk, at Gosford green; and from hence, on the appointed day, he "issued forth," says Dugdale, "armed at all points, and mounted on his white courser, barbed with blue and green velvet, gorgeously embroidered with swans and antelopes of goldsmith's work." The combatants were prevented from fighting by the King, and banished; and the final result was, the weak and misguided Richard lost both his crown and life.

Baginton estate was purchased, in the reign of James the first, by William Bromley, Esq. whose grandson, William Bromley, Esq. several times represented the county of Warwick in parliament, in the reign of Queen Anne. He was also speaker of the house of commons, and, afterwards, one of the principal secretaries of state. The present mansion of *Baginton Hall*, which is finely situated on a commanding eminence, was erected by this gentleman, as, in 1706, his mansion here was accidentally destroyed by fire. It is a large elegant building,

and contains some valuable paintings and a good library. It is now the residence of Mrs. Price, a descendant of the Bromley family, to whom the estate belongs.

The church at Baginton is a neat structure, dedicated to St. John the Baptist. To use the language of Mr. Pratt, in his "Guide to Leamington," "The ivy-covered spire of Baginton church, which is enveloped by that clinging plant, by innumerable branches, to the very topmost vane of the steeple, and issuing from one root, the expansion of which forced its way through the stone buttresses, is a real natural curiosity."

At CALUDON, about three miles from Coventry, was formerly a castle, that originally belonged to the family of Segrave, from which it passed by marriage to that of the Mowbrays. At this castle Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, lodged previous to his intended combat with the Duke of Hereford, at Gosford green; and from hence he advanced, "on a horse barbed with crimson velvet, embroidered with lions of silver, and mulberry trees." Of this castle very little remains, as, about half a century ago, Lord Clifford, father of the present Lord Clifford, who is owner of the manor, erected a farm-house for one of his tenants from its ruins.

FILLONGLEY, a considerable village, is about six miles from Coventry north-west by north. At this place, according to Dugdale, there anciently

stood two castles; one a short distance from the church, on the south side; to which was a park of very large extent, and is now called castle-yard. The other castle was situated about a quarter of a mile to the north-east of the church, to this day called castle-hills. These castles are supposed by Dugdale to have been seats of the powerful family of Hastings, before they settled at Abergavenny.

In the reign of Edward the first, John de Hastings, lord of Fillongley, procured a charter for a weekly market on Mondays, and an annual fair to last five days, to be held here; but they have long been discontinued.

MERIDEN, a pleasant and cheerful village, is situated on the road to Birmingham, six miles from Coventry. This place was anciently called *Alspath;* and in the reign of Edward the second, Nicholas de Segrave obtained a charter for a market upon Tuesdays, and an annual fair for eight days, to be held at this his manor of Alspath. It was called by that name till the beginning of the reign of Henry the sixth, "about which time," says Mr. Pennant, "becoming a great thoroughfare, it got the name of *Myreden; den* signifying a bottom, and *myre* dirt; and I can well vouch for the propriety of the appellation, before the institution of turnpikes."

At this place is a large inn, called the Bull's Head, famed for its excellent malt liquor: it was anciently a seat belonging to the Earl of Aylesford.

Adjoining it are spacious pleasure grounds and shrubberies, ornamented with summer-houses, Chinese pagodas, statues, ponds, &c. and it is much resorted to by the inhabitants of Coventry.

The church at Meriden is situated on an eminence, and contains a handsome monument to the memory of John Wyard, who is represented recumbent, with his hands joined in prayer, and in armour. He was knight of the shire for this county, and founded a chantry in the church at Meriden, in the reign of Henry the fourth. There is another tomb in this church with no inscription, but Dugdale supposes it was erected to the memory of one of the Walshes, anciently lords of this manor.

In the parish of Meriden, is a handsome family mansion, the seat of Wriothesley Digby, Esq.

Journey from Coventry, through Bedworth, Nuneaton, and Atherston, to Tamworth.

ON leaving Coventry we proceed in a south-east direction, and at the distance of about four miles, in which the Coventry canal intersects the road three times and the Oxford canal once, we leave, a short distance to the left, the village of EXHALL, of which *Dr. Thomas*, the continuator of "Dugdale's Antiquities of Warwickshire," was vicar for many years. He was born in 1670, and was grandson to Dr. Thomas, Bishop of Worcester. He was educated at Westminster school, from whence he was elected to Trinity college, Cambridge, in 1688. In 1718 he took the degree of Doctor, and through the interest of Lord Somers, to whom he was distantly related, he obtained the living of Exhall. In 1700 he travelled into France, and afterwards married the daughter of George Carter, Esq. of Brill, in Buckinghamshire, by whom he had a numerous family. In 1721 he removed to Worcester for their education; and in 1723 he was presented to the rectory of St. Nicholas, in that city, by Bishop Hough. Dr. Thomas wrote "The Antiquities of the Priory of Great Malvern," "A Survey of Worcester Cathedral," and to "Dugdale's Antiquities of Warwickshire" he made many valuable additions. He died

July 26, 1738, aged 68, and was buried in Worcester cathedral.

Continuing our route, and at the distance of five miles from Coventry, we arrive at BEDWORTH, a place long distinguished for its coal mines. A considerable number of the inhabitants of Bedworth, who were stated in 1811, to be 2,964, are employed in obtaining this necessary and useful mineral, and derive support from their subterraneous avocations. From hence there is a collateral cut to the Coventry and Ashby-de-la-Zouch canals, by means of which the coals are forwarded with ease and cheapness for use.

ASTLEY, a small village, is about three miles from Bedworth, and four and a half from Nuneaton. At this place resided, for several years, a distinguished family of the name of Astley, one of whom, Sir Thomas de Astley, in the reign of Edward the third, erected a collegiate church here. This estate afterwards passed from the Astley family to the Greys, of Ruthin, and descended to the Duke of Suffolk, father of Lady Jane Grey, who, engaging in an insurrection in the reign of Queen Mary, and being unsuccessful, is reported to have confided himself to the keeper of his park here, who concealed him in a large hollow tree; but, being tempted by the reward offered for his apprehension, he betrayed the unfortunate Duke into the hands of his enemies, and he was beheaded on tower-hill, London.

The ancient mansion at this place, called *Astley Castle*, was the occasional residence of the Astley family, but the time of its erection cannot be exactly ascertained. After the death of the Duke of Suffolk it was suffered to go into ruins; it, however, was again restored. It is surrounded by a moat, over which is a stone bridge with embattled parapets, that leads through a pointed gateway to the court. The whole building bears strong marks of the ravages of time, and being luxuriantly clothed with ivy, presents an extremely picturesque appearance.

The church at Astley was formerly collegiate, and was erected by Sir Thomas de Astley in the reign of Edward the third, who dedicated it to St. Mary, and ornamented it with a tall spire, covered with lead. The widow of the Duke of Suffolk, who held this lordship as part of her dowry, much defaced the church, by causing the lofty spire, which, from its serving as a land-mark in the then deep woodlands of this district, was called the *Lanthorn of Arden*, to be pulled down. She also caused the two aisles, and St. Ann's chapel adjoining the church, to be demolished. The manor of Astley coming into the possession of Richard Chamberlain, Esq. he began, about 1607, to repair the church, and took down the western part of it, making what was originally the choir the body of the church, and erecting the chancel from the materials of St. Ann's chapel. The tower, which is at the west end, was also erected by

this gentleman; and the church upon the whole, though it has received so many mutilations, presents a handsome appearance. In the interior are eight stalls on each side, with painted figures of saints, and two ancient altar tombs without any inscriptions.

Continuing our journey, and at the distance of about three miles from Bedworth and eight from Coventry, we arrive at NUNEATON, a large market town, situated on the river Anker, 18 miles from Warwick, and 99 from London.

Dugdale supposes that the latter part of the name of this town, *eaton*, was so named from the stream near which it stands, *ea* in old English, signifying water; and the former part, *Nun*, was given it, there is no doubt, from the convent of nuns that was at this place.

In the reign of King Stephen, Robert, Earl of Leicester, founded a monastery of the order of St. Fontevrault, which was remarkable on account of its including monks and nuns in one house. It is certain that a prior resided here, though whether there were monks with him is not known.

In the reign of Henry the third, the nuns obtained the grant of a weekly market to be held at this place on Tuesday, but a few years after it was altered to the Saturday; and in the same reign they procured a charter for an annual fair to last four days.

This convent was exceedingly well endowed, and at the dissolution its annual revenue was £290 15 0½.

The prior and all the nuns had pensions for life. It was granted, with all the lands in this county thereto belonging, to Sir Marmaduke Constable, junior, Knight.

At the north-west end of the town, near the road leading to Atherstone, are some remains of this monastery, but very small, being only an entire arch, and a small portion of the walls.

The Church at Nuneaton is a handsome Gothic edifice, with a square tower, containing six bells, a clock, and chimes. The interior of the church is well fitted up, and is ornamented by several tablet monuments.

Nuneaton has a well endowed *Free School*, founded by the inhabitants in the reign of Edward the sixth, towards establishing which the King gave three closes of ground, lying in the liberties of Coventry.

The Market at this place is on Saturday; and *Fairs* are held annually on February 18, May 14, and October 31. The principal manufacture carried on here is that of weaving of ribbons. According to the returns made to parliament, in 1811, this town contains 1,101 houses, and 4,947 inhabitants.

CALDECOTE is a small village, about two miles north-west from Nuneaton. At this place is a handsome mansion, called *Caldecote Hall*, remarkable for having been defended with bravery and success in the civil war, by George Abbott, Esq. against a detachment of eighteen troops of horse, under the

command of the Princes Rupert and Maurice, in August, 1642. Mr. Abbott had only eight men with him, besides his mother and her women; and, according to tradition, they melted the pewter dishes and plates, used in the family, into bullets on this occasion. Thomas Fisher, Esq. the present proprietor of the above mansion, has made great additions to it, without, however, entirely destroying its venerable appearance.

The church at Caldecote is a plain Gothic structure, containing several monuments to the Purefoy family, anciently lords of this manor; and also a tablet to the memory of the aforesaid Mr. Abbott, bearing the following historical and biographical inscription:—

"Here lieth the body of George Abbott, late of Caldecote, in Warwickshire, Esq. whose eminent parts, virtues, and graces, drawn forth to life in his exemplary walking with God; his tenderness to all the members of Christ, who fervently yielded to his charity in their wants, and counsel in cases of conscience; his exact observation on the Sabbath, which he vindicated by his pen, and on which, Aug. 28, 1642, God honoured him in the memorable and unparalleled defence of this adjoining house, with eight men (besides his mother and her maids), against the furious and fiery assault of Princes Rupert and Maurice, with eighteen troops of horse and dragoons; his perspicuous paraphrases on the books of Job and

Psalms; his judicious tracts of public affairs, then emergent; his known integrity in public employments, rendered him one of a thousand for singular piety, wisdom, learning, charity, courage and fidelity to his country, which he served in two parliaments, the former and this present, whereof he died a member February the 2nd, 1648, in the 44th year of his age."

BURTON HASTINGS, a small village but large parish, is about four miles south-east from Nuneaton. Part of this parish was given in the reign of Henry the second to the monastery of Nuneaton, and the nuns possessed it till the dissolution. The other part was possessed by the Hastings family, who continued owners of it till the reign of Henry the fourth, when Ralph Hastings joining in a conspiracy with the Earl of Northumberland, the Duke of York, and others, against the King, he was taken and beheaded at Durham, and his lands confiscated to the crown; they were, however, afterwards restored to his younger brother, on whose death they came to his nephew, William Hastings, who held many high offices under King Edward the fourth, and was summoned to parliament among the peers, by the title of Lord Hastings. After King Edward's death, this nobleman was basely accused of treason by the Duke of Gloucester, afterwards King Richard the third, for obstructing his ambitious design to gain the crown, when he caused him to be

pulled from the council table, in the tower of London, and his head laid upon a log of wood that was upon the green before the tower chapel, and severed from his body.

At SHIRFORD, in the parish of Burton Hastings, was formerly an ancient manor house, but it has long been demolished. Respecting this mansion, Dugdale relates a murder that was committed on Sir Walter Smith, the owner, by his wife, with the assistance of two servants, in 1553, which is briefly as follows:—Sir Walter, in his old age, imprudently married a very young lady, and, after a short time, her affections wandering after younger men, and particularly on a Mr. Robinson, she determined to get rid of her husband. Accordingly, after he had retired to bed, she, with the assistance of her waiting maid and a groom, strangled him with a towel; the old gentleman, however, little thought his wife was an actor in his strangulation, for when the towel was first cast about his neck, he cried out, "Help, Doll, help!" To conceal the murder, they placed his body on a close stool, and a short time after, the lady made an outcry in the house, wringing her hands and weeping, pretending that missing her husband out of bed, she went to see where he was, and found him dead in that condition. However, about two years after, the groom, when tipsy, informed the son of Sir Walter, by a former wife, of the whole transaction; and though he afterwards made his escape, yet being retaken, he was, with the

lady and maid, tried at Warwick. The lady was burnt at a stake on Wolvey-heath, and the groom and waiting maid were executed at Warwick.

ANSLEY is a small village, about five miles west by north from Nuneaton. At this place is a fine large family mansion, called *Ansley Hall*, the seat of John Newdigate Ludford, Esq. Attached to the mansion is a large park, pleasingly scattered with wood, and well stocked with deer. In one part of this domain is a Chinese temple, beneath which, in a cell, is a monument to one of the Purefoy family;—this monument was originally placed in Caldecote church, but when some repairs were made to that edifice, about the year 1766, it was taken down and thrown into the church-yard;—and is thus preserved from destruction. In another part of the grounds, very rural and retired, is a picturesque hermitage, formed from the stones of an ancient oratory. The celebrated poet, Warton, who visited Ansley Hall in 1758, wrote and left in this cell some elegant lines, which are printed among his poetical works.

The church at Ansley is an ancient edifice, with a square tower at the west end, that deserves attention from its architectural beauty. In the church there are several inscriptions and monumental records.

At BRAMCOTE, in the parish of Bulkington, about four miles from Nuneaton, is a mansion, the property of Sir Francis Burdett, Bart.

At WESTON-UPON-ARDEN, also in the parish of Bulkington, was anciently a manor house, surrounded by a park, that belonged to the De-la-Zouch family.

WOLVEY is situated about six miles from Nuneaton. This village is memorable in history, as being the place where King Edward the fourth was surprised in his tent by the *stout* Earl of Warwick, who carried him prisoner to Middleham castle, in Yorkshire.

Reginald Basset, lord of this manor in the reign of Henry the third, bestowed on the monks of Combe abbey his manor house and whole lordship of Wolvey, with the homage and services of all that held thereof. The monks, in the reign of Edward the second, obtained a charter for a weekly market upon the Wednesday, and an annual fair to last three days, but they have been long discontinued.

In a solitary spot on Wolvey heath was anciently an hermitage, but when, or by whom it was founded, is unknown.

Continuing our journey from Nuneaton, and immediately on leaving that town, the road rises very considerably, and for about two miles runs along the side of very elevated ground, from which are some of the most extensive and pleasing prospects in the county. At the distance of about four miles from Nuneaton, we pass the village of MANCESTER, which is recorded to occupy part of the scite of the

ancient Roman city *Manduessedum*. The Watling-street passes near the village, and there are very visible remains of a camp. Many Roman coins of silver and brass have been at this place turned up by the plough, and other relics of antiquity found.—The church at Mancester is a respectable edifice, dedicated to St. Peter. In this church a chantry was founded by the abbot and convent of Merevale, in the reign of Henry the sixth, for one priest to celebrate divine service daily. There was also a gild founded in the same reign by the advice of the abbot of Merevale.

In the parish of Mancester is the small village of **OLDBURY**, where on the summit of a commanding eminence, are the remains of an ancient fort, of a quadrangular form, which is supposed to have been the summer camp to the Roman station Manduessedum. It contained about seven acres of ground, enclosed with very broad, high ramparts; three sides are still remaining. Dugdale informs us, that in the north part of this fort have been found many flint stones, about four and a half inches long, curiously ground in the form of a pole-axe, and which he supposed were used as weapons by the ancient Britons, before they attained the knowledge of working iron or brass to such uses. The nuns of Polesworth had a cell on the south side of this fort, to which they retired when they were expelled by Robert Marmion, Lord of Tamworth castle, from their convent at

Polesworth. At present a large handsome mansion is situated on this fort, the seat of H. F. Okeover, Esq. which has the advantage of commanding fine and very extensive prospects.

HARTSHILL is another hamlet in the parish of Mancester, and forms part of the scite of the ancient city Manduessedum. It is situated on a very high eminence, from which more than forty churches can be seen with the naked eye! According to tradition, there was formerly a castle here, and some embattled walls were standing in the time of Dugdale.—In 1773, as a cottager was enlarging his little croft at this place, he enclosed a small unnoticed tumulus, when on making it level, better to answer his purpose, he found a brick pavement about six feet square, with a hole at each corner; but not thinking it worth notice or preservation, he destroyed it.

At Hartshill was born, in 1563, the celebrated poet, *Michael Drayton*. He was educated at Oxford, and in 1593 he published a collection of pastorals, entitled "The Shepherd's Garland;" and, before 1598, he presented before the public his "Baron's Wars," and "England's Heroical Epistles." In 1613, he published his "Poly-Olbion, or a Description of England." In 1627, he published another volume of poems, containing "The Battle of Agincourt," "Miseries of Queen Margaret," "Court of Fairies," "Quest of Cynthia," "Shepherd's Syrena," "Elegies," and a spirited satire

against female affectation, called "Mooncalf." In 1630, he published another volume of poems, called "The Muses Elisium," &c. Drayton also wrote several other pieces, and, dying in 1631, was buried among the poets in Westminster abbey. On his monument is the following epitaph:—

"Doe pious marble, let thy readers know,
What they and what their children owe
To Drayton's name, whose sacred dust
We recommend unto thy trust.
Protect his memorie, and preserve his storie,
Remain a lasting monument of his glorie;
And when thy ruins shall disclaim
To be the treasurer of his name,
His name, that never fades, shall be
An everlasting monument to thee."

Continuing our route from Mancester, and at the distance of about one mile, we arrive at the pleasant market town of ATHERSTONE, which has a very considerable thoroughfare, and is situated on the Roman road called Watling-street, in the parish of Mancester, 13 miles from Coventry, 23 from Warwick, and 107 from London.

This town consists principally of one street and a square market place; the street is about three quarters of a mile in length, and is fronted by many handsome well-built houses. A handsome *Market House*, on pillars, has been erected within these few years, and it contains a good room, used for assemblies, &c.

At this place was formerly a convent of mendicant friars of St. Augustine's order, founded in the reign of Edward the third, by Ralph Lord Basset, of Drayton. It was the only one of the kind in this county, and its buildings covered twelve acres of ground. At the dissolution, the annual revenue of this establishment was only £1 10 3, as this order of friars rejected all endowments of lands, and subsisted on the alms of the pious and charitable. The scite of the friary was granted to Henry Cartwright, and afterwards came by purchase to Sir John Reppington, Knight, who built a house upon the ruins of the monastic edifice. The mansion at present occupying the scite was erected by an ancestor of the present owner and occupier, Abraham Bracebridge, Esq.

After the dissolution, the *Church* belonging to the friary, which was erected in the reign of Richard the second, was granted to the inhabitants of Atherstone, as a chapel of ease to Mancester, and as such it remains; but a south aisle has been since built, and other additions made, for the convenience of the inhabitants of the town.

At this place there is a good *Free Grammar School*, founded in the reign of Elizabeth (1573), by Sir William Devereux, Knight, and other persons. The old chancel of the friary church is appropriated to the use of this institution.

The Canal which proceeds from Coventry to Fazeley, passes within a hundred yards of Atherstone, and is of considerable service to the inha-

bitants, as boats are continually passing from Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, &c.; and the river Anker flows at a short distance from the town, fertilizing the meadows till it falls into the Tame, at Tamworth.

Atherstone is remarkable in history for being the place where the Earl of Richmond (afterwards King Henry the seventh), and the nobles of his party, held a council on the night preceding the memorable battle of Bosworth field, in which the tyrannical Richard the third lost his life. The house where the Earl of Richmond lodged is supposed to have been the Three Tuns Inn, situated in the centre of the town. Bosworth field is about nine miles distant from Atherstone; the battle was fought on August 14, 1485, and terminated the contentions between the houses of York and Lancaster.

The manufactory of hats employs a number of persons at Atherstone, and there are also manufactories of ribbons, tammies, and shalloons. The *Market* is on Tuesday; and *Fairs* are annually held here on April 7, July 18, September 19, and December 4: these fairs are exceedingly well attended, and the one in September is considered the largest in England for cheese. According to the returns made to parliament in 1811, Atherstone contains 601 houses, and 2,921 inhabitants.

At Atherstone was born, in 1607, *Obadiah Grew*, a nonconformist divine, who was educated at Baliol college, Oxford, and was for many years vicar of

St. Michael's church, Coventry, but was ejected by the act of uniformity in 1662. He wrote "Sermons on the Parable of the Prodigal Son," and "A Sinner's Justification by Christ," and died October 22, 1689.

Nehemiah Grew, an eminent writer, philosopher, and physician, was son of the above divine, and born at Atherstone in 1641. He studied physic in a foreign university, and in 1672 settled in London, where his merits and extensive practice recommended him to the royal society, which learned body, in 1677, appointed him their secretary, which he held till his death, in 1711. His principal works are, "Anatomy of Plants;" "Comparative Anatomy of the Stomach," &c.; "Catalogue of Rarities belonging to the Royal Society;" and "Cosmologia Sacra, or a Discourse of the Universe."

MEREVALE is a village about one mile from Atherstone. At this place was an abbey for monks of the cistercian order, founded in the reign of King Stephen, by Robert, Earl Ferrers. This abbey was well endowed, and received many very considerable benefactions. At the dissolution, its revenue was £254 1 8 per annum; and the abbot and monks were allowed pensions for life. The scite, with much of the adjacent land, was granted by Henry the eighth to Sir Walter Devereux, Knight. Some mouldering remains are still to be seen of this abbey.

Merevale is adorned by the elegant and delightfully situated mansion of Dugdale Stratford Dugdale, Esq. one of the representatives in parliament for the county of Warwick. This gentleman is descended in a female line from Sir William Dugdale, the indefatigable and illustrious historiographer of this county.

Continuing our journey from Atherstone, and at the distance of about three miles, we pass through the village of GRENDON, where is a mansion, the seat of Sir George Chepping.

About two miles beyond Grendon is the village of POLESWORTH, where was formerly a nunnery, founded, according to Dugdale, by Egbert, the first English monarch, for St. Modivena, an Irish lady, daughter of the King of Connaught, and her nuns; this lady having, it appears, cured his son Arnulph of a leprosy. This legend, however, rests upon no solid foundation; and we cannot, therefore, give it the stamp of authenticity. Polesworth appears to have been given by William the conqueror, to Robert Marmion, Lord of Tamworth castle, who expelled the nuns from their convent here, and they were obliged to retire to a cell belonging to them at Oldbury beforementioned. They were restored, however, about a year after; Marmion having repented of his harsh conduct to them, and he not only entreated their pardon, but bestowed upon them the town of Polesworth, and his demesne in Waverton.

In the reign of Henry the third the nuns obtained a charter for a weekly market, and an annual fair to last three days, to be held at Polesworth; they are, however, now both discontinued.

At the dissolution the revenue of this convent was £109 6 6 per annum; and the abbess and nuns were allowed pensions for life. The remains of this nunnery are considerable, forming a fine picturesque object; and as this was the first religious house founded in Warwickshire, the view of the ruins calls forth feelings of peculiar interest.

A free school was founded at Polesworth in the reign of James the first, by Sir Francis Nethersole, Knight, public orator at Cambridge, who also rebuilt the vicarage house.

About three miles from Polesworth we arrive at TAMWORTH, a very ancient, large, and well-built market town and borough, situated at the conflux of the rivers Tame and Anker. It is almost equally divided into two parts by the Tame—the eastern side of the town being in this county, and the western in Staffordshire. It is 27 miles from Warwick, 22 from Stafford, 14 from Birmingham, and 118 from London.

At this place was anciently a palace of the Mercian Kings, "who preferred it," says Mr. Pennant, in his Journey from Chester to London, "on account of its pleasant situation, and the quantity of woodland, which afforded them in plenty the plea-

sures of the chase;" and King Offa dates a charter from his palace here, to the monks of Worcester, in 781.

There are still remains of a large trench that protected the town on the north, west, and east sides; the rivers Tame and Anker forming a natural defence on the south. Dugdale relates that the trench was filled up in many places in his time, but where it was perfect, he found it by admeasurement to be forty-five feet wide. Out of this trench have been dug, at various times, many warlike instruments; also bones of men and horses.

This town was plundered by the Danes, and continued in a ruinous condition till the year 914, when the famous Princess Ethelfleda, daughter of King Alfred, restored it to its ancient strength and splendour; raising a strong tower upon an artificial mount of earth, called the don-jon, upon which mount the building now called the castle stands. Ethelfleda died at Tamworth, July 19, 918, and was buried in the cathedral at Gloucester.

The part of Tamworth which is situated in Warwickshire was an ancient demesne of the crown, and till the latter end of the reign of Henry the third continued in the immediate possession of our Kings. It was then let to Philip Marmion, lord of the castle, for life, at the annual rent of £34 6 9. It afterwards was held by our Kings; but Edward the second granted it to the inhabitants of the borough,

their heirs and successors, reserving to the crown the ancient ferme rent, and at the same time increasing it.

Tamworth was made a corporate borough by Queen Elizabeth, in the third year of her reign. The corporation consists of two bailiffs, (one chosen from the Warwickshire part, and the other from the Staffordshire part of the town) a recorder, and twenty-four principal burgesses, one of whom is town-clerk, a high steward, under steward, and other inferior officers. They have the power of holding a three weeks court of record, and of acting as justices of peace within the borough: they also hold a court leet once a year.

The town first sent members to parliament two years after it was incorporated. The right of voting is in the inhabitants, being householders, paying scot and lot, and not receiving alms. The freeholders had formerly votes, in common with those above-mentioned, but they were deprived of that privilege by a resolution of the house of commons, in 1722. The members are returned jointly by the sheriffs of Warwickshire and Staffordshire—the number of voters is about 250.

Tamworth *Castle*, once the residence of the Mercian Kings, was destroyed by the Danes when they plundered the town, and was refounded by Ethelfleda, daughter of King Alfred, in 914. It was in possession of King William after the conquest, and was

given by that monarch to Robert Marmion, Lord of Fontenaye, in Normandy. Scott's poetical Lord Marmion is represented as of this family; and, on his arrival at Norham castle,

> "They hail'd him Lord of Fontenaye,
> Of Lutterward and Scrivelbaye,
> Of Tamworth tower and town."

The Marmions continued Lords of Tamworth castle till the reign of Edward the first, when by marriage it became the property of William Mortein, and passed afterwards to the Freville family. It next was transmitted to the Ferrers family, from whom it came to the Comptons, and then to the Marquis Townsend, in right of Lady Charlotte Compton, daughter of the Earl of Northampton. It is now occupied by Mrs. Lucas.

The castle is built on an artificial mount, from whence there is a fine prospect of the adjacent country. The exterior is in a good state of preservation, and presents a very antique appearance. The interior has recently been much beautified and rendered more commodious; and from many of the rooms there are beautiful prospects of the town and its vicinity.

The Church at Tamworth, dedicated to St. Edith, stands in the Staffordshire part of the town. It is an extensive but irregular pile, and, having been erected at different periods, exhibits various styles of building. It was made collegiate by one of the

Marmions, lords of the castle, and contained a dean and six prebendaries. Several lay prebendaries are still attached to the church, but there is no dean. The interior of the church is handsome, and adorned by several curious antique and other monuments.

Tamworth has an *Hospital,* founded and endowed by Mr. W. Guy, a rich bookseller, who founded the noble hospital in the borough of Southwark, that bears his name.

In the Staffordshire division of the town is a *Grammar School,* founded by Queen Elizabeth.

There are two *Bridges* across the rivers Tame and Anker, which, meandering through the meadows in the vicinity of the town, not only enrich the landscape by their fine inartificial curves, but tend greatly to fertilize the soil. A canal passes by the town, which communicates with the Thames, Severn, Humber, &c.

The manufacturing of narrow cloths was formerly carried on at Tamworth to a considerable extent, but this has much declined; and the manufacture of flax, and the printing of calicoes, now employ a number of persons. There are also tan-works of some magnitude, and the town is noted for good ale.

The Market is on Tuesday, but was formerly on Saturday; and annual *Fairs* are held here on January 25, May 4, July 26, September 6, and October 24.

The population of Tamworth is as follows:—in the Warwickshire part of the town, 326 houses and 1,663 inhabitants; and the Staffordshire part, 222 houses and 1,123 inhabitants.

Edward Dickenson, Esq. has a mansion, and resides within two miles of Tamworth.

Thomas Fisher, Esq. has also a mansion, and resides two miles from Tamworth.

POOLEY HALL, a handsome and commodious mansion, the seat of the Honourable Colonel Finch, is about four miles south-east from Tamworth. The family of Cokain resided at Pooley from the reign of Henry the fourth for several ages; and the present mansion was erected by one of that family, Sir Thomas Cokain, in the reign of Henry the eighth.

SECKINGTON, a small village, is about four miles from Tamworth, near the northern border of the county. This place is remarkable as the scene of a dreadful battle, in 757, between Cuthred, King of the West Saxons, and Ethelwald, King of the Mercians. King Ethelwald fell in this battle by the treachery of Beonard, one of his own officers; but the traitor did not escape unpunished, being put to death by King Offa, who succeeded Ethelwald on the throne of Mercia.

Near Seckington are the remains of a large castramentation, of a circular form; on the north side of which is a lofty turret, that appears to have served the purpose of a watch tower.

According to tradition, there was formerly a castle at Seckington, which was taken down in the reign of Henry the second, to build the priory at Aucote; Dugdale, however, doubts the truth of the tradition, as he found no mention of such a castle in any of our ancient records.

At AUCOTE, near Seckington, there was formerly a benedictine priory, cell to the abbey of Great Malvern, Worcestershire, founded in 1159, by William Burdett, according to Dugdale, in contrition for a crime he committed in stabbing his wife, on his return from the holy war, on a false information he had received of her committing adultery. This priory was not fortunate in receiving benefactions, as its annual revenue at the dissolution was only £6 2 10.

Journey from Tamworth, through Sutton Coldfield, to Birmingham.

On leaving Tamworth we cross the river Tame, and, at the distance of about four miles, leave, a short distance to the right of the road, the elegant and commodious seat of Sir Robert Lawley; and about two miles further, to the right of the road, is the noble mansion of Sir Edmund Cradock Hartopp, Bart. situated in a finely-wooded park, well stocked with deer. At the distance of seven miles from Tamworth, we arrive at **SUTTON COLDFIELD**, a neat market town, situated in the north-west extremity of the county, on an eminence commanding pleasant prospects, and it is recorded that this place existed in the time of the Saxons. It is 7 miles from Birmingham and 111 from London; and "there is not," observes Mr. Newte, in his "Tour in England and Scotland," "perhaps any spot that can be fixed on more central than this to the kingdom of England."

In the twenty-eighth of Edward the first, Guy de Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, obtained a grant of a market to be held weekly at this place on the Tuesday, and an annual fair for four days. This market being probably discontinued, Thomas de Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, in the twenty-seventh

of Edward the third, obtained another charter for a market on the same day, and two annual fairs. In the reign of Henry the seventh, this market was quite forsaken, and the town was falling into ruin and decay, when its gradual course to destruction was arrested by the friendly hand of John Vesey, or Harman, Bishop of Exeter, who was born at this place. This prelate, who bore a strong affection for his native place, bestowed on the poor a large tract of land in the vicinity of Sutton Coldfield, for pasturage. In the twentieth of Henry the eighth, he procured letters patent from the King to incorporate the town, by the name of a warden and society; to consist of twenty-four persons, besides the warden, town-clerk, steward, and one or two serjeants at mace. The Bishop likewise built a market house, paved the town, repaired and beautified the church, and built and endowed a free school at this place. He also built some houses here for the purpose of introducing the clothing manufacture; but it was afterwards neglected and is now discontinued, though the houses still remain.

The Church at Sutton Coldfield is a handsome Gothic structure, consisting of a nave, chancel, and two side aisles, with a square tower, in which is a clock, six bells, and a set of chimes. It is a singular circumstance, that bodies buried in the churchyard here, are consumed to ashes in a very short time; this arises most probably from some internal

heat in the soil. Mary Ashford, who was brutally violated and murdered in the parish of Aston,* lies interred in this church-yard, and the stone erected to the memory of this unfortunate young woman bears the following inscription, written by the Rev. Dr. Booker:—

As a warning to female virtue,
And a humble monument to female chastity:
This stone marks the grave
of
MARY ASHFORD,
Who, in the 20th year of her age,
having incautiously repaired
to a Scene of Amusement,
without proper protection,
was brutally violated and murdered
on the 27th of May, 1817.

Lovely and chaste as is the primrose pale,
Rifled of virgin-sweetness, by the gale,
MARY! the wretch who thee remorseless slew,
Will surely GOD's avenging wrath pursue.
For tho' the deed of blood be veil'd in night,
Will not the Judge of all the Earth do right?—
Fair blighted flower! the Muse that weeps thy doom
Rears o'er thy sleeping dust this warning tomb.

* See account of Aston, in a succeeding page, for a brief detail of these horrid deeds.

Bishop Vesey, as already mentioned, founded a free grammar school at this place; the school was rebuilt in 1728, and presents a neat appearance.—By the injunction of the Bishop the master was to be a layman; the nomination is vested in the corporation.

The chief manufactures of Sutton Coldfield are connected with Birmingham, as the making of gun-barrels, axes, knives, forks, buttons, &c. and a considerable number of persons are employed in this manner. The market at this place is on Monday; and fairs are annually held here on Trinity Monday, and November 8. According to the returns made to parliament in 1811, Sutton Coldfield is stated to contain 617 houses, and 2,959 inhabitants.

At this place (as before-mentioned) was born *John Vesey* or *Harman*, Bishop of Exeter. He was educated at Magdalen college, Oxford, and in the twenty-second of Henry the seventh, became vicar of St. Michael's, Coventry. He was next made dean of the Chapel Royal, Windsor, by Henry the eighth, who likewise employed him in different embassies, made him tutor to the Princess Mary, and president of Wales. In the eleventh of that monarch's reign, he was made Bishop of Exeter, but in 1551, he was compelled to resign that bishopric; however Queen Mary, when she ascended the throne, reinstated him. He soon after voluntarily resigned, and the latter days of his life he spent at Moor Hall, a house that he built near Sutton Cold-

field. He died in 1555, at the advanced age of one hundred and three years, and was buried on the north side of the chancel in the church at his native place.

Mr. Shaw, in his "History of Staffordshire," supposes that in the days of Druidism, the chief seat of the Arch-Druid of Britain was in the vicinity of Sutton Coldfield. A large common here is called *Drood* or *Druid's Heath.*

The tract of land called the *Coldfield,* comprises near thirteen thousand acres, the greatest part of which is situated in Staffordshire. The Warwickshire part is much overgrown with gorse, and presents a very bleak and barren appearance.

Sutton Park is situated to the north-west of the town, and contains about three thousand five hundred acres. It is in the hands of the corporation of Sutton, to whom it was granted by Bishop Vesey, for the benefit of the poor inhabitants of the town. The great Roman military way, called the Ikenild-street, passes through the park and coldfield, in a good state of preservation. Mr. Hutton, in his "History of Birmingham," observes, "I must take the curious traveller to that vast waste called Sutton Coldfield, about four miles distant, where he will, in the same road, find the footsteps of those great masters of the world, marked in lasting characters. He will plainly see its straight line pass over the ridgeway, through Sutton park, leaving the west hedge about two hundred yards to the left; through the remainder of the

Coldfield, till lost in cultivation. This tract is more than three miles in length, and is no where else visible in these parts. I must apprize him that its highest beauty is only discovered by an horizontal sun in the winter months. I first saw it in 1762, relieved by the transverse rays, in a clear evening in November; I had a perfect view upon the ridgeway, near King's Standing, of this delightful scene. Had I been attacked by the chill blasts of winter upon this bleak mountain, the sensation would have been lost in the transport. The eye at one view takes in more than two miles. Struck with astonishment, I thought it the grandest sight I had ever beheld; and was amazed so noble a monument of antiquity should be so little regarded."

Near Sutton Coldfield are the remains of a fortification, called *Loaches Banks*, which forms a square of about four acres, and is supposed to have been a British camp. It is secured on three sides by a morass, and only accessible on the fourth.

Continuing our journey from Sutton Coldfield, and from thence till we pass on the right the village of Aston, within one mile of Birmingham, nothing particularly claims attention.

ASTON is a very large parish, taking in the two extremities of Birmingham, and St. John's chapel, in Deritend, is a chapel of ease to it. The church at Aston is an ancient structure, and its tower is surmounted by a spire of considerable height. In

the church-yard is a grave-stone, on which is inscribed some poetry, informing the reader that it was the first grave-stone put up in that church-yard. Respecting this stone, the author has received some information from a friend, who resided for some time at Birmingham, which he thinks worthy of notice. This gentleman went one afternoon to Aston, and walking in the church-yard, took notice of an old grave-stone, partly covered with moss, on which were inscribed some lines, intimating that it was the first grave-stone set up there, and which he, of course, regarded as an object of curiosity. Happening to go the same walk again a few months after, he strolled into the church-yard to look at the old stone, but what was his astonishment on perceiving in its place, absolutely a white modern stone, with the same date and inscription as the old one! Part of the old stone was lying, broken in two pieces, at the foot of the new one! We have only to remark on this account, how void of taste, or even of common sense, must have been the church-wardens, or those persons that authorised this proceeding.

In the parish of Aston, situated about two miles from Birmingham, is a fine old mansion, called *Aston Hall,* erected in the reigns of James the first and Charles the first, by Sir Thomas Holt, Bart. This gentleman was a zealous royalist, and entertained Charles the first here for two nights, a short time previous to the battle of Edge-hill. In the staircase of

this mansion, still remains the shot-hole of a cannon-ball, which was fired at the house while his Majesty was in it. At this mansion there is a series of armed portraits, with tabards, the armour of the age of Edward the third: there are nine figures, to represent two Earls of Mercia and seven of Chester. These figures were first set up in the great hall at Brereton, Cheshire. They have been well engraved and coloured by Mr. Fowler.

At Aston is an alms house for five men and five women, endowed by Sir Thomas Holt, Bart. beforementioned. The building was erected in 1655, by his grandson.

It was in the parish of Aston that the brutal violation and murder of MARY ASHFORD was perpetrated,—deeds of the blackest dye,—the account of which scarce needs repetition here, as it has reached the remotest corners of this kingdom; we shall, however, give a brief account of it, as some of our readers might think this "tale of terror," which has excited so much interest as to be made the topic of conversation in all companies, an omission.—Mary Ashford, of Erdington, a fine young woman, in the twentieth year of her age, incautiously repaired to a scene of amusement on the 27th of May, 1817, unattended by proper protection, and on her return, she was encountered by some villain, who, it is supposed, taking indecent liberties with her, and she making resistance, was by him violated and mur-

dered. Suspicion fell on *Abraham Thornton*, of Aston, who accompanied her from the scene of amusement, who was the last person seen with her before her body was discovered in a pit with marks of violence on her person, and who had been heard to say "he would effect the ruin of Mary Ashford—even if it was to be done at the cost of his life." He was immediately arrested and committed to Warwick, where he was arraigned at the bar, but was acquitted, —it being proved, to the satisfaction of the jury, an alibi. This verdict, however, as evidence seemed so plain against him, did not satisfy the friends of the unfortunate violated and murdered, nor even the public, and Thornton was again arrested and took to London, where he was several times examined; but the law which empowers the next of kin of any one murdered to have a person taken into custody for the same offence after he has been once acquitted, does not enact that such person shall be obliged to undergo a second trial by a jury, but that he may instead, *wage battle* with such person who caused him to be arrested, and if he can defend himself from sun-rise till sun-set, he is acquitted; and if not, he is considered guilty, and executed. Thornton claimed to wage battle with the brother and next of kin to Mary Ashford, who being but 18 years of age, and naturally weak, it was considered vain for him to oppose himself, as he might probably fall a sacrifice to Thornton, who was a very stout man; and indeed

the attorney-general upon his recently bringing a bill into parliament to prevent in future the *wager of battle*, said, that had Ashford accepted the challenge, it would have been the duty of his Majesty's government to have prevented the combat from taking place. Thornton was, therefore, set at liberty, and he returned to Aston, but being looked upon by the public generally as guilty, he formed a resolution of leaving his native country, and going to America. He left Aston for Liverpool to accomplish his design, but he did not, according to the Liverpool paper, embark with the first vessel he took his passage in, as the other passengers, after understanding the supposed murderer was to accompany them, refused to go if he did, and the captain was obliged to leave him behind; he, however, was afterwards successful in obtaining a passage by the ship Shamrock, which sailed from Liverpool on the 30th of September, 1818.

Mary Ashford was interred at Sutton Coldfield, and in our account of that place, we have given the inscription written to her memory.

One mile from Aston, and seven from Sutton Coldfield, we arrive at BIRMINGHAM, a large populous town, situated near the centre of the kingdom, in a kind of peninsula, at the north-west extremity of the county, in the hundred of Hemlingford, diocese of Lichfield and Coventry, and deanery of Arden; 20 miles from Warwick, 16 from Coventry, 30 from Worcester, and 109 from London.

It is a place of great antiquity, and is mentioned in the "Itinerary of Richard of Cirencester," by the name of Bremenium; it was likewise anciently written Brumwycheham, Bromwycham, and in "Doomsday Book" it is written Bermingham.

Very little is known with certainty of the ancient state of Birmingham; but Mr. Hutton, in his history of this town, conjectures that the implements of iron used by the ancient Britons, as scythes, swords, spears, &c. were manufactured "by the black artists of the Birmingham forge." He observes, which is the principal argument in favour of this supposition, "Upon the borders of the parish stands Aston furnace, appropriated for melting iron-stone and reducing it into pigs: this has the appearance of great antiquity. From the melted ore in this subterranean region of infernal aspect is produced a calx, or cinder, of which there is an enormous mountain. From an attentive survey, the observer would suppose so prodigious a heap could not accumulate in one hundred generations; however, it shows no perceptible addition in the age of man.

"There is, also, a common of vast extent, called Wednesbury Old Field, in which are vestiges of many hundreds of coal-pits, long in disuse, which the curious antiquarian would deem as long in sinking, as the mountain of cinders in raising."

"If we survey Birmingham," observes Mr. Hutton, "in the twelfth century, we shall find her

crowded with timber within and without, her streets narrow and dirty, and much trodden. Her houses were mean and low, but few reaching higher than one story, perhaps none more than two, composed of wood and plaster—she was a stranger to brick. Her public buildings consisted only of one, *the Church.* If we behold her in the fourteenth century, we shall observe her public buildings increased to four, two in the town and two at a distance; the priory, of stone, founded by contribution, at the head of which stood her lord; the gild, of timber, now the free school; and Deritend chapel, of the same material, resembling a barn, with something like an awkward dove-cote, at the west end, by way of steeple."

The priory stood in the square, and fragments of the old foundations are still visible in some of the cellars. The out-buildings and pleasure grounds belonging to the priory occupied the whole north-east side of Bull-street. Large quantities of human bones have been dug up in the Minories, which circumstance shews it to have been the burial-place belonging to this religious edifice.

At a short distance from St. Martin's church, formerly stood a castellated mansion, where the Lords of Birmingham, who took their name from hence, resided; a manufactory, however, has long stood in its place; and the moat that surrounded the mansion, part of which was remaining within these few years, has been filled up, and a market made on its scite, for cattle, horses, sheep, pigs, &c.

During the civil war, Birmingham appears to have been spirited in the cause of the parliament; and the day after King Charles left Birmingham for Shrewsbury, in 1642, the inhabitants seized his carriages, containing the royal plate and furniture, which they sent for security to Warwick castle. In 1643, the King ordered Prince Rupert, with two thousand men, to open a communication between Oxford and York. The Prince at Birmingham found a party of the rebels, commanded by Colonel Greaves, who, with the assistance of the inhabitants, having cast up slight works at each end of the town, prepared for a vigorous resistance. A sharp contest ensued, the parliamentarians gave way, and a running fight continued through the town. Prince Rupert was victorious, though he lost the brave Earl of Denbigh, and, in revenge for the resistance which had been made, set fire to the town; the inhabitants, however, after a few houses had been consumed, were allowed to extinguish the flames, on condition of paying a heavy fine.

In 1665, Birmingham suffered very severely from the plague. Such numbers fell victims to its ravages, that the church-yard was too small to contain them, and the dead were interred in a waste piece of ground in Lady Wood-lane, thence denominated the pest ground.

At the time of the restoration, Birmingham, it is supposed, consisted of about fifteen streets, and 900 inhabitants. About the year 1700, the number of

streets amounted to thirty; since which time the increase has been so rapid, that there are now upwards of three hundred, and the number of these still increasing. According to the returns under the population act, in 1811, the number of houses in Birmingham were 16,931, inhabited by 18,165 families, amounting to 85,753 persons; of whom 81,642 were supposed to consist of families connected with trade and manufactures.

The town of Birmingham extends about two miles in length, including the hamlets of Deritend and Bordesley, and the approach to it is by ascent on all sides, except from Hales Owen. The soil, in and near the town, consists of a dry red-coloured sand; the air is naturally pure; and notwithstanding the disadvantage of its crowded population, the noxious effluvia of its numerous metallic trades, and the continual smoke arising from the immense quantity of coals consumed, it is remarked by Dr. Price, an accurate observer, to be one of the most healthful towns in England, and this is proved from the instances of longevity being far from infrequent.

A small river, called the Rea, bounds the east side of the parish, and in the lower part of the town there are two excellent springs of soft water; one at the top of Digbeth, the other at Lady Well. The pumps at the top of Digbeth are continually at work to supply the inhabitants with this necessary article. At Lady Well there is a most complete set of baths, erected at the expense of two thousand pounds. The

baths are of marble, seven in number, and are always ready for the accommodation of hot and cold bathing, with conveniences for sweating, &c. An oblong bath, appropriated for swimming, is situated in the centre of the garden, in which are twenty-four private recesses to undress in. This bath is one hundred and eight feet in length and fifty-four feet in width, and the garden is surrounded by a wall ten feet high.

Birmingham, though so large a town, is not incorporated, which, perhaps, may be one reason of its astonishing increase. There are five active magistrates, four of whom attend at the public-office, in Moor-street, every Monday and Thursday, to administer justice. The officers chosen annually to govern the town are a high bailiff, low bailiff, two constables, one headborough, two high tasters to examine the malt liquor, two low tasters or meat conners, two affeirers to ratify the chief rent and amercements, and two leather sealers.

We now, with pain, advert to the memorable *Riots* of Birmingham, in 1791, and shall endeavour to give a concise account of them :—

On July 14, 1791, about eighty persons, of various denominations, met at the hotel in Temple-row, to celebrate the anniversary of the French revolution, when a vast concourse of people assembled round the hotel, and becoming turbulent, the gentlemen prudently retired; but the mob, far from contented, about eight o'clock in the evening, broke all the win-

dows of the hotel; they then proceeded to the new meeting (Dr. Priestley's), which they set fire to, and left in ruins; the old meeting-house shared the same fate. The rioters then proceeded to Dr. Priestley's house, about a mile from Birmingham, on the Oxford road, which they set on fire, and his valuable library, manuscripts, and philosophical apparatus, perished in the flames; the Doctor himself, however, happily escaped. The next day, Friday, July 15, they began by burning the mansion of John Ryland, Esq. at Easy Hill,* formerly the residence of the celebrated Baskerville; they then divided, and while one party of them were setting fire to Bordesley Hall,† the elegant seat of John Taylor, Esq.‡ the other destroyed the house, stock in trade, &c. of Mr. Hutton,

* This mansion was built by Mr. Baskerville, and when first erected it was situated in the country; but so rapid has been the increase of Birmingham, that it is now entirely surrounded by buildings. After Mr. Baskerville's death, it became the residence of Mr. Ryland, who married Miss Baskerville, and till lately continued in the same ruinous condition it was left by the rioters in 1791.

† This fine mansion, after its destruction by the rioters, was suffered to remain till recently, in the same state in which they left it.

‡ "This gentleman was a striking instance what large fortunes may be made in a trading country in a short time, he having in the space of about forty years acquired, from almost nothing, nearly the sum of 200,000 pounds. The sudden rise, and great increase of the town of Birmingham, are owing in a great measure to his wonderful genius, by inventing, improving, and perfecting, the various branches of manufactories which still subsist in that place."---*Nash's History of Worcestershire.*

author of the "History of Birmingham." On Saturday, July 16, they destroyed another house belonging to Mr. Hutton, at Saltley; the delightful residence of George Humphreys, Esq. at Spring Grove, next fell a prey to rapine; and the mansion of William Russell, Esq. was left in ashes. Moseley Hall, the property of John Taylor, Esq. but in the occupation of Lady Carhampton, was next doomed to the flames. The rioters sent word to this lady, who was enfeebled and blind through age, to remove with her furniture, and she was kindly taken by Sir Robert Lawley in his carriage to a place of safety. The residences of the Rev. Mr. Hobson, Mr. Howard, Rev. Mr. Coates, Mr. Hawkes, and Thomas Russell, Esq. were either pillaged or burnt. The next day, Sunday, July 17, Kingswood meeting-house was burnt, together with the parsonage-house, and that of Mr. Cox, licensed for divine worship. Edgbaston Hall, the residence of Dr. Withering, was next plundered, and the house of Mr. Male was also attacked; but the rioters, hearing in the evening that the military were approaching, which proved to be a body of the Oxford blues and a party of light horse, they by degrees dispersed. The town was illuminated all night to give effect to the troops, who lay on their arms till ten o'clock next morning. During the night, reinforcements of soldiers arrived from every quarter, and in the morning a regular guard was established, when, by the exertions of the soldiers, order was soon restored.

The terror and distress which pervaded the whole town, while these dreadful outrages were committed, will be better imagined than described. The shops were shut up, business at a stand, and every one employed in secreting and removing their valuables. The magistrates tried every measure of persuasion, to no effect; money was offered them to desist, but without avail; and several hundreds of constables were sworn in, composed of every description of inhabitants, to disperse them; but the constables were defeated, after a very dreadful conflict, in which many of them were wounded, and one killed.

In acknowledgment for the services of the military, the dissenters presented them with one hundred pounds; and, at a town meeting, the same sum was voted to the privates, and a valuable sword to each of the officers. The damage sustained by these outrages was estimated at £60,000. At the ensuing Warwick assizes, four of the rioters were capitally convicted; two of them were executed, and the other two received his Majesty's pardon. An act was obtained, in 1793, to reimburse the sufferers in these riots, who, in their various trials, recovered £26,961 2 3.

Birmingham has only two parish *Churches*, St. Martin's and St. Philip's. *St. Martin's*, or as it is commonly called *The Old Church*, is of very remote antiquity, and was probably founded in the time of the Saxons. The antiquity of this church is demonstrated by a survey of the church-yard, as from the

eminence on which the High-street stands, there is a steep descent into Moor-street, Digbeth, &c.; this descent is broken only by the church-yard, which, from its having been used as a burial ground to the town for ages, has been augmented into a considerable hill, and as the ground increased, wall after wall was added to support the growing soil. In 1781, in removing some old houses to widen St. Martin's-lane, the church-yard wall was taken down, which was fifteen feet high on the outside, and three within; this proved to be only an outward case that covered another wall twelve feet high, in the front of which was a stone elevated eight feet, and inscribed Robert Dallaway, Francis Burton, church-wardens, anno dom. (supposed) 1310. The workmen, also, came to a third wall covered with antique coping, four feet high, coeval most probably with the church itself.

The church was originally built of stone, but in 1690 it was cased with brick, except the spire.—The spire, which is very high, has been several times injured by lightning, and in 1781, forty feet of it was taken down and rebuilt. In the interior of the church there are several ancient and modern monuments, and arms of illustrious families. Under the south window are two monuments of white marble, much injured by time. The left hand figure is supposed to represent William de Birmingham, who was made prisoner by the French, at the siege of Bellegrave, in 1297. He is apparelled in a short mantle, the dress of that time; a sword, expressive of the military

order; and he bears a shield, with a bend lozenge. The right hand figure, next the wall, is visibly of much greater antiquity; and, Mr. Hutton observes, "Even Westminster abbey, famous for departed glory, cannot produce a monument of equal antiquity." Under the north-east window there is another monument of white marble, to the memory of one of the Lords of Birmingham, but this is of much less antiquity than the two before-mentioned.

In 1786, the church underwent a thorough repair, at the expense of four thousand pounds. At that time the windows which then gave light both to the galleries and body of the church were removed to give place to the present double range. There is an excellent organ in the church, but, from its being unfortunately placed too near the roof, much of the effect is lost. The steeple contains a peal of twelve musical bells, and a set of chimes, which play a different tune every day in the week. The value of the rectory is upwards of a thousand pounds per annum.

St. Philip's Church.—This is an elegant modern pile, and the steeple is a curious piece of architecture, erected after the model of St. Paul's, in London, and contains a ring of ten bells. Until the beginning of the eighteenth century, Birmingham constituted but a single parish; at that time a triangular portion of the town, covering about a hundred acres, was divided from the rest, and made a separate parish, to which was given the name of *St. Philip's*.

The church was consecrated in 1715, and finished in 1719; but the urns upon the parapets were not placed till 1759. It stands upon the summit of the highest ground in Birmingham; and the church-yard, occupying a space of four acres, shaded by lime trees, is one of the most beautiful in the kingdom. The interior of the church is very elegant; the organ is richly adorned with gilding, &c. and is a most excellent one. Several neat tablets are placed against the pillars; and on the front of the organ-gallery there is an inscription, to commemorate a benefaction of six hundred pounds, given by King George the first, towards the building of this church. Beneath the centre of the church is a vault, for the interment of particular persons. In the vestry there was a theological library, bequeathed by the first rector, William Higgs, for the use of the clergy of Birmingham and its vicinity; but, in 1792, an excellent library was erected adjoining the parsonage-house, by the Rev. Spencer Madan, called the Parochial Library, to which the books have been removed.

A new church, called *Christ Church*, or *The Free Church*, was opened for divine service July 4, 1813. It is situated at the junction of the New-street with the Haymarket, and is a large plain Roman structure, of much strength, surmounted by a handsome steeple, ending in a short spire. The sum expended in the erection of this edifice was upwards of twenty thousand pounds; one thousand of which was presented

by his present Majesty, and the remaining sum was raised by public subscription.

In Birmingham there are five *Chapels* connected with the established church, viz. St. Paul's, St. Bartholomew's, St. Mary's, St. John's, and Ashted chapel, all of which are handsome modern structures, particularly St. Paul's, in which there is a Venetian window, eighteen feet high and seventeen feet wide, filled with painted glass, representing the conversion of St. Paul; it is beautifully executed, and reflects great credit on the abilities of Mr. F. Egginton, the artist.

Birmingham also contains near twenty *Places of Worship*, belonging to the different denominations of Protestant Dissenters; a Roman Catholic chapel, and a Jew's synagogue.

We now proceed to mention the *Charitable and Laudable Institutions* in Birmingham; but as they are very numerous—"In Birmingham charity never faileth"—our limits will allow us to particularize only the principal.

The Free School.—The building appropriated for this noble institution is situated in New-street, on a spot of ground where, in 1383, was erected a building called the *Gild of the Holy Cross.* When this establishment, with others of the same kind, was dissolved by Henry the eighth, its revenue was £31 2 10 per annum. In 1552, King Edward the sixth, at the solicitation of the inhabitants, assigned

the lands formerly belonging to the gild, for the foundation of a free grammar school; and at present, by the increase in the value of land near Birmingham, they produce annually more than two thousand pounds. The old school was taken down in 1707, and the present spacious edifice erected on its scite. The front is ornamented with a figure of Edward the sixth, dressed in a royal mantle, with the ensigns of the garter, holding a bible and sceptre—this, however, is far from being a master-piece of sculpture. A chief master presides over the school, with an adequate salary; under whom is a second master, two ushers, a writing master, a drawing master, and a librarian. Seven exhibitioners are sent to the university at Oxford; and several inferior schools, in various parts of Birmingham, are supported by this excellent institution.

The Blue Coat School.—This is a spacious structure, situated in St. Philip's church-yard, and was built in 1724; but raised to its present magnitude in 1794. In the front of the building there are figures of a boy and girl, in the uniform of the school, executed with much spirit. The annual income of this charity amounts to about £1,330, and the number of children educated, clothed, lodged and boarded, are about two hundred; of whom a hundred and fifty are boys, and the remainder girls.

The Dissenter's Charity School.—This was instituted about the year 1758, for forty boys and twenty

girls, who are educated, clothed, lodged and boarded. In 1759, a building in Park-street was purchased for the use of this charity, and improved at a considerable expense.

A school on the plan of Mr. Joseph Lancaster, established at Birmingham in 1809, exhibits some improvements upon the original system, and is, perhaps, one of the most effective seminaries in the kingdom; about 400 boys are daily educated on this system. There is, also, a school at Birmingham on the plan of Dr. Bell, which is conducted in an excellent manner; about 400 boys and 150 girls are daily educated on this plan.

A school for the education of deaf and dumb children has been established at Birmingham, which has met with very liberal support, and is at present in a high state of prosperity.

At Birmingham there are numerous *Sunday Schools*, which contribute much to the happiness and morality of the lower orders of society;—one only, however, of these particularly claims our notice, and this is connected with the Unitarian congregation assembling at the New Meeting-house; by which upwards of four hundred boys and one hundred and eighty girls receive weekly instruction. The building erected for the use of this school is of brick, very large and substantial, four stories in height, and was erected at the expense of £1,025, exclusive of £400, being the sum paid for

the purchase of the ground on which it is situated; forming in the whole £1,425, and the principal part of this has been collected by voluntary subscriptions and contributions.

The General Hospital here is a noble edifice, begun in 1766, and finished, excepting the two wings, in 1779, at the expense of about £7,000. The wings were added, at an expense of more than £3,000, in 1791. As the principles of these excellent institutions are every where so nearly the same, it is unnecessary for us to enlarge upon them; suffice it to observe, that near a hundred patients, on an average, are weekly accommodated in this hospital. It is supported by voluntary subscriptions, and by the produce of a musical festival held in St. Philip's church, once in three years; which, after discharging the various expenses amounting to several thousand pounds, has of late furnished a sum of £3,000 to this excellent institution. Many handsome legacies have also been left to this hospital.

The Dispensary, which is well supported, is a plain stone building in Union-street, erected in 1808, at the expense of £1,700. Here indigent sick persons receive advice and medicine gratis.

The Poor House is a spacious building, erected in 1733, at the expense of £1,173; but since that period, two wings have been added to it, at the expense of £1,100. Several attempts have been

made to introduce different manufactures into this house, but as yet with little success.

The Prison is situated in Moor-street, and was erected in 1806, at the expense of £9,000. The front, which is of stone and presents a handsome appearance, is fitted up as a public office, for the purpose of town meetings, &c.; and to the back is the superintendent's house, to which is attached the prison.

The Barracks, situated on the north side of the town, were erected by government in 1793, at the expense of £13,000; they are capable of accommodating one hundred and sixty-two men.

The Theatre is a noble building, situated in New-street, and was erected at the expense of £14,000.—It will contain an audience of two thousand persons, and is allowed, for its size, to be one of the most superb and commodious theatres in the kingdom. In the centre of this building, to the front, is the Shakespear tavern and hotel, including a spacious room, where are held assemblies, concerts, &c.

The Public Library is an appropriate structure, situated in Union-street. It was first established on a small scale in 1779, but at present, the number of volumes it contains, are about 20,000, in various branches of literature. Another *Public Library* was instituted in 1796, in a small building in Canon-street, which contains a good collection of books, and these still increasing. There are also, a *Medical Library*, a *Law Library*, and several others on

small scales. *A Philosophical Society* has been also established, and a building is dedicated for experiments in chemistry, and other branches of science.

The Crescent at Birmingham has been long begun, and is intended, when completed, to consist of a superb range of twenty-three stone houses. The houses in the wings have been for some time finished, but, to use the words of a Birmingham Guide, "the crescent is still in the clouds."

In the centre of the Bull-ring, there is a fine bronze statue of Admiral Lord Nelson, executed by Westmacot, at the expense of £2,500, raised by subscription.

There are a number of public gardens and bowling greens at Birmingham, that furnish an agreeable fund of recreation; among these are Vauxhall and Spring Gardens, which in the summer season present amusements similar to those of Vauxhall in London; and in the winter there are weekly balls and concerts.

The Ikenild-street, one of the great Roman roads, passes within a mile of Birmingham, entering the parish by the Observatory, in Lady Wood-lane, crosses the Dudley road, and quits it at Hockley Brook.

Birmingham has been long distinguished for the variety and importance of its manufactures, in which it may rank with the first cities in the world; and it has, with great propriety, been called by an eminent statesman (Mr. Burke) the "Toy Shop of Europe;"

and by Dr. Stukeley, the "Shop of Vulcan." It was anciently, for many centuries, celebrated for its extensive leather market, which was held by charter; and there are now two officers chosen annually as leather sealers, though the tan yards have been many years built upon, and the extensive leather hall, situated at the east end of New-street, has been suffered to go to decay. Mr. Hutton observes, "the leather sealers have no duty, but that of taking an elegant dinner!" When he wrote his "History of Birmingham," published in 1780, only one tanner is said to have exercised his art in the town.

Previous to 1688, the manufactures of Birmingham were principally confined to coarse iron-ware, nails, bits, and some laquered articles. We find it recorded, that William the third, regretting that orders should be sent to Holland for arms, Sir Richard Newdigate, member of parliament for this county, observed "That genius resided in Warwickshire, and that he thought his constituents could answer his Majesty's wishes." Upon this, a pattern was executed, which, when presented to the royal board, gave entire satisfaction. The manufacture of buttons and buckles next began to flourish; and soon after there seems to have arisen a gradual and general spirit for the fabrication of every variety of hardware.

To enter into a detail of the numerous productions manufactured at Birmingham, would be far surpassing our limits; it will be sufficient to remark, that

the Birmingham artists comprehend every complicated and ingenious contrivance for the abridging of labour, as steam engines, cylinders, pumps, flies, wheels, levers, and pinions of iron, which astonish by the vastness of their power and minute accuracy. There are manufactories of buttons, cutlery, gilt and steel toys, guns, muskets (of which no less a number than 14,500 were delivered weekly before the close of the late war, in the ordnance-office, for the use of government), swords, military accoutrements, buckles, stirrups, spurs, edge tools, files, saws, grates, stoves, fire irons, fenders, bellows, locks, bolts, chains, springs, lamps, lanthorns, candlesticks, snuffers, knives and forks, spoons, steelyards, scales, nails, screws, wire, needles, pins, thimbles, fish hooks, umbrellas, parasols, straw and chip hats, all sorts of japanned articles, whips, tortoiseshell and horn combs, picture frames, &c. &c. &c. There are also very extensive brass founderies, numerous works for gilding, plating, and silvering, and several glass houses; and human industry is turned to such account, that not only great numbers of women find employment, but children only a few years old can assist in some of the operations. Access may be had to most of the manufactories, on application to the respective proprietors.

The Soho, two miles from Birmingham, is one of the largest manufactories in the kingdom. The premises consist of four squares, with connecting ranges

of shops, like streets, capable of giving employment to a thousand workmen, in manufacturing all the varieties of articles in gold, silver, steel, &c.; and the improved steam engines, invented by Messrs. Boulton and Watt, and made here, may be placed among the most ingenious and laudable productions. The copper coinage now in circulation was struck at the Soho. These manufactories are prohibited from being seen, in consequence of persons having made an improper use of this indulgence; but the show-room, in which the different articles manufactured here are exhibited for sale, is well worthy the attention of the stranger.

Near the Soho is Mr. Egginton's celebrated manufactory of painted glass. The father of the present proprietor restored this long lost art; and numerous productions that now adorn many churches and other edifices in the kingdom, have been executed both by the father and son, some of which, for elegance of design and richness of colour, yield not the palm to any ancient specimens.

The shop of Messrs. Richards, in High-street, Birmingham, filled with a multiplicity of valuable articles; the superb show-room and manufactories of Mr. Thomason, in Church-street; Clay's celebrated japan manufactory and show-room, in Newhall-street; and Clark and Ashmore's whip manufactory, in the Bull-ring, are all well deserving notice.

Markets are held at Birmingham on Mondays, Thursdays, and Saturdays; and annual *Fairs* on

Thursday in Whitsun-week, and Thursday in the first week in October. It seems surprising that so large a town as Birmingham is unprovided with a market-house; in consequence of which, the stranger views, with astonishment, vegetables, fruit, butter, eggs, &c. exposed for sale in the open street; and crockery-ware in Moor-street, and under the walls of St. Martin's church-yard. Indeed we cannot but remark, that there is still room for much improvement at Birmingham, and the luxury of a flag pavement is a terrible desideratum! A few years ago the market for cattle was in Dale-end, and sheep and pigs were exhibited for sale, in partitions made with hurdles, in New-street; but a commodious market-place, called Smithfield, has been made on the scite of the moat that anciently protected the mansion belonging to the Lords of Birmingham, which has been filled up and levelled.

The town of Birmingham derives very great advantage from its navigable canals, which communicate with the Severn, Thames, Humber, &c. The great expense of land carriage is thus obviated, and its various manufactures are conveyed by water to the different sea-ports of the united kingdom, from whence they are exported to all parts of the known world.

Birmingham, though so famous for its manufactures, cannot boast of having been the birth-place of any very celebrated character. The smoke of Birmingham, however, as Mr. Hutton observes, "has

been very propitious to the growth of gentlemen. Like buttons they have been stamped here, but like them, when finished, are moved off. Both originate from a very uncouth state, and pass through various stages, uncertain of success. Some of them, having received the last polish, arrive at perfection; while others, ruined by a flaw, are deemed *wasters*. The man of opulence has directed his gilt chariot *out* of Birmingham, who first approached it in rags; and the chief magistrate of 50,000 people has fallen from his phaeton, and humbly asked bread at a parish vestry. Many fine estates have been struck out of the anvil, valuable possessions raised by the tongs, and superb houses, in a two-fold sense, erected by the trowel. Many families have acquired immense fortunes, and quitted the meridian of Birmingham; while, on the contrary, others of great antiquity are reduced to the anvil or lathe for bread, or thrown on the parish."

Among the few persons mentioned in history as natives of Birmingham, we find *Richard Smallbroke*, Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, in the reign of George the second. His ancestors were for many ages inhabitants of Birmingham, and he possessed much property in the town. He was author of several works, the most celebrated of which is, "A Treatise in Vindication of the Miracles of Jesus."

Among eminent men who have resided at Birmingham, was the celebrated *Baskerville*, the finest

printer of the time in which he lived. He was born in 1706, at Wolverley, in Worcestershire; and, according to the Biographia Britannica, he acquired early in life a love for fine writing and cutting in stone. In 1726, he became a writing master at Birmingham, and afterwards entered into the lucrative trade of japanning. In 1750, his love of literature induced him to turn his attention to the art of letter founding, ink making, and printing, in which pursuit he spent much money before he could please himself, and the first fruit of his labours, a beautiful quarto edition of Virgil, appeared in 1756. He afterwards printed many of the ancient and modern classics, and other works, which, however well they pleased the literati, proved but of little emolument to himself. He died in 1775, and after his death his types were offered for sale; "but, to the lasting discredit of the British nation, no purchaser could be found in the whole commonwealth of letters." They were at length, in 1779, purchased by a literary society at Paris, for £3,700. Mr. Baskerville, sometime previous to his death, erected the mansion at Easyhill before-mentioned, afterwards the property of Mr. Ryland. In the garden belonging to this house, he, at his own express desire, was interred, in a conical building, with the following epitaph, written by himself, inscribed thereon:—"Stranger, beneath this cone, in *unconsecrated* ground, a friend to the liberties of mankind directed his body to be inurned. May the example contribute to emancipate

thy mind from the idle fears of *superstition*, and the wicked arts of priesthood."

Another very eminent man who resided at Birmingham, was the indefatigable antiquary and historian, *William Hutton, Esq. F. A. S. S.* He was born at Derby, in September, 1723, and was placed in a silk mill, where he passed several years; but, having a turn for literature, he, in 1750, commenced business in half a shop at Birmingham, with a few old books; and purchasing the refuse of a dissenting minister's library, he, at the end of the year, had gained a few pounds, and then took a house, and carried on business to a larger extent. In 1756, he married, and opened a paper warehouse at Birmingham, and, having gained a considerable fortune, he resigned the business to his son, in 1793.—Mr. Hutton was the author of numerous works; among them was a "History of Birmingham," published in 1780, and which, since that period, has passed through several editions:—from this work, much of our ancient account of Birmingham is taken.

The vicinity of Birmingham is enriched by numerous small gardens, belonging to different artizans of the town, who, according to their own taste, erect grottoes, alcoves, bowers, &c.; and these gardens, no doubt, add much to the healthiness of their proprietors, as they resort to them in an evening for the purpose of breathing a purer air, after being neces-

sarily confined during the day by their respective businesses.

In the immediate neighbourhood of Birmingham, there are also numerous villas, belonging to the more opulent inhabitants of the town; some of them are charming retreats, being commodious and elegant, and furnished with lawns, gardens, shrubberies, &c.

About a mile from Birmingham, on the road to Coleshill, is a *Chalybeate Spring*, which, being free of access to every one, is used by no one. Mr. Hutton observes, "This excellent spring lies forlorn, neglected, and exposed to every injury; it seems daily to solicit protection, and offer its friendly aid in restoring health; but being daily rejected, it seems to mourn the refusal, dissolve itself into tears, and, not being allowed, though designed by nature, to increase the health of man, moves weeping along to increase a river."!

Edgbaston Hall, a large mansion, the residence of Edward Johnstone, M. D. is situated about two miles from Birmingham, and was erected by Sir H. Gough, in 1717. A mansion on this scite, belonging to the Middlemore family, was garrisoned by the parliament in the time of the civil war; but this was burnt down by the populace of Birmingham soon after the abdication of James the second, lest it should be used as a place of retreat for the Papists.

Journey from Birmingham, through Henley-in-Arden, to Alcester.

On leaving Birmingham we proceed down Digbeth, and for the first ten miles nothing that particularly claims the attention of the traveller occurs; however, at about the seventh mile from Birmingham, a short distance to the right of the road, is *Leigh Hall,* the residence of John Burman, Esq. At the tenth mile we pass through the village of HOCKLEY, where is an excellent inn, at which the coaches, &c. change horses.

Umberslade Hall, for a long period of time the seat of the ancient and honourable family of the Archers, is in the parish of Tanworth, a short distance from Hockley. Thomas Archer, owner of the above mansion, was created Lord Archer, Baron of Umberslade, in the reign of George the second. This nobleman was succeeded in his possession of the title and estate by his son Andrew, who dying in 1778, without male issue, the title became extinct. His daughter was married to the Earl of Plymouth, to whom the estate now belongs.

The mansion is a large and handsome stone structure, of a square form, erected about one hundred and fifty years ago. In the western and southern fronts, there is a grand portico, supported by pillars

of the Doric order, surmounted in the former by a bust of the Emperor Titus Vespasian, and in the latter by the arms of the Archer family, surrounded by military trophies. The interior is now neglected and unfurnished; and the park which surrounds the mansion is converted to the purposes of agriculture. *Since the above account was wrote, Umberslade Hall has been advertised to be sold by auction, as building materials.*

The church at Tanworth is a handsome building, and contains some fine monuments of the Archer family.

Continuing our journey, and at the distance of about 4 miles from Hockley and 14 from Birmingham, we arrive at HENLEY-IN-ARDEN, a small market town, 9 miles from Warwick, 8 from Stratford-upon-Avon, and 105 from London.

It is a chapelry in the parish of Wooton Wawen, and, as its name implies, is situated in a tract of land that anciently formed part of the extensive forest of Arden. It is supposed that this town took its rise from its vicinity to the castle of Beaudesert, where a market was held by a grant of King Stephen; and that buildings were erected here for the accommodation of persons attending that market.

In the fifth of Henry the third, Peter de Montfort obtained the grant of a weekly market, and an annual fair to last two days, to be held at Henley; some years after, however, the town experienced a dreadful

misfortune, being burnt down, about the time of the battle of Evesham. It probably soon recovered from the effects of this calamity, as in the twenty-fourth of the reign of Edward the first, it was styled a borough.

In the twenty-seventh year of the reign of Henry the sixth, there was an hospital erected at this place; and in the same year, a grant was obtained for two annual fairs.

The Chapel at Henley is a neat edifice, erected in the reign of Edward the third. In this chapel a gild was founded by Ralph Boteler, Lord Studley, for four priests to pray for the founder's soul. At the dissolution, in the reign of Henry the eighth, there were but three priests, and its annual revenue was valued at £27 3 3. Sir William Dugdale observes, "Before the dissolution of the gild, it was a custom that upon all publique occasions (as weddings and the like) the inhabitants of this town kept their feast in the gild house,* before specified; in which they had most kind of household stuff, as pewter, brasse, spits, andirons, linen, tables, &c. and wood out of the little park at Beldesert, for fewell; those which were at the charge of the feast paying only 6*s*. 8*d*. for the use of them: but now all is gone except the pewter, which being in the chapel warden's custody, they lend out for 4*d*. a dozen, when any feast is made."

* This building was situated on the north side of the chapel.

In the market-place at Henley are the remains of a cross, but it is in a very mutilated state.

The Market here is on Monday; and its *Fairs* are on March 25, Tuesday in Whitsun-week, and October 29.

According to the returns made to parliament, in 1811, Henley is stated to contain 254 houses, and 1,055 inhabitants.

BEAUDESERT, or BELDESERT, is situated in the immediate neighbourhood of Henley-in-Arden, and is said to have derived its name from its pleasant situation. Here was anciently a very large and strongly fortified castle, which was erected a short time subsequent to the Norman conquest, by Thurstane de Montfort, and was occupied by his descendants for a long period of time. During the struggles between the white and red roses, this structure was dismantled, and so complete was the demolition, that, in Dugdale's time, there was not "one stone left upon another;" and, at present, the only vestige remaining is a moat, now dry, which formerly encompassed it.

The church at Beaudesert is a very ancient structure, and its east end exhibits some curious and interesting remains of Saxon architecture.

At Beaudesert was born, in the year 1715, *Richard Jago*, the poet, whose father was for some time rector of this parish; and at the east end of the church there is an inscription to his memory. Young

Jago was educated at Solihull grammar school, and at University college, Oxford. In 1737 he took orders, and in 1746 obtained the livings of Harbury and Chesterton. In 1754, Lord Clare obtained for him the vicarage of Snitterfield; and in 1771, Lord Willoughby de Brooke gave him, instead of Harbury, Kilmcote, in Leicestershire, worth three hundred pounds per annum. He died in 1781, and was buried at Snitterfield. He was the author of several pleasing poems; and his elegies on the blackbirds, the goldfinches, and the swallows, are equal, if not superior, to any of the kind in the English language, and are deservedly admired. A descriptive poem, called "Edge Hill," came from his pen in 1767, and he obtained for it a numerous list of subscribers. He published also "Labour and Genius," 4to. and was the author of several minor pieces. "Jago maintained an uninterrupted friendship and correspondence with Shenstone, Graves, and Somerville, who bear ample testimony of his learning, taste, and good sense." "As a descriptive poet, he evinces a picturesque imagination, a correct judgment, and a delicate taste, refined by a careful perusal of the ancient classics;" and "On the whole his writings are distinguished by an amiable humanity, and tender simplicity of thought and expression; his diction is elegant and poetical; he discovers no want of ease or fancy, but shews a goodness of disposition in every part of his works."—*Cabinet of Poetry, vol.* 6.

At PINDLEY, or PINLEY, in the parish of Claverdon, about four miles from Henley, was formerly a benedictine nunnery, founded soon after the conquest by R. de Pilardinton. At the dissolution, the annual revenue of this establishment was £22 6 4. But few remains are visible of this monastic edifice, and these are attached to a farm house.

Continuing our journey from Henley, and at the distance of about two miles, is the small village of WOOTON WAWEN, where was formerly a benedictine priory, cell to the abbey of Conches, in Normandy; founded in the reign of Henry the second. The revenues of the alien priories, as they were called, were often seized by the reigning monarchs, and this priory, in common with others of the same kind, was not exempt from these misfortunes, its lands being seized by Richard the second, and given to the carthusian priory near Coventry, and afterwards, by Henry the sixth, to King's college, Cambridge, on its foundation by that monarch.

In 1643, Sir Charles Smythe was created Baron Carrington of Wooton, by Charles the first, for his attachment to him; but the title became extinct in 1705. Lady Smythe, a descendant of the same family, has a handsome stone mansion in this parish; it is of a square form, and its interior is fitted up in a style of superior elegance.

At EDSTON, in the parish of Wooton Wawen, was born, in 1692, *William Somerville*, who wrote

"The Chase," a poem deservedly admired, and several other pieces. He also is said to have translated Voltaire's play of "Alzira." Somerville resided as a country gentleman at his native place, enjoying an estate of fifteen hundred pounds per annum, and was intimately acquainted with Shenstone and the Rev. Mr. Jago. Dr. Johnson observes, that Somerville set a good example to men of his own class, by devoting part of his time to elegant knowledge; and he has shewn, by the subjects which his poetry has adorned, that it is practicable to be at once a skilful sportsman and a man of letters. He died in 1742, in the fiftieth year of his age, and was buried at Wooton.

Continuing our journey, and at the distance of about six miles from Wooton Wawen, we arrive at ALCESTER, a neat market town and borough, situated in a very fertile country, at the junction of the rivers Alne and Arrow, over each of which there is a neat bridge; about 16 miles from Warwick, and 103 from London.

Alcester, as its name implies, is a place of great antiquity, the word *cester* being an expression used by the Saxons to denote a city, or fortified place. There is no doubt of its having been a Roman station, as it is situated upon the Ikenield-street; and many Roman bricks, urns, and coins of gold, silver, and brass, have been found here. Numerous human skeletons have also been dug up; and coins and

other Roman remains still continue to be discovered, by means of the spade and plough.

The lordship of Alcester was in the crown from the conquest, and, according to several historians, here was formerly a royal palace, the occasional residence of our Kings. Alcester was granted from the crown by Henry the first to Sir Robert Corbit, "for the sake of his daughter," who was a mistress of that monarch's, and by whom he had a son named Reginald, advanced to the Earldom of Cornwall by King Stephen; and he was also possessor of Alcester. In the fifty-sixth year of the reign of Henry the third, part of this manor passed by purchase to Walter, brother of William de Beauchamp, first Earl of Warwick of that name, in the possession of whose descendants of the male line it continued till the reign of Henry the eighth, when it passed to the Greville family, by marriage with a daughter of Sir Richard Beauchamp.

Alcester was styled a borough in the reign of Henry the first; and in the twenty-third of Henry the second it paid four marks aid to the King, amongst the other boroughs of this county.

A Monastery of benedictine monks was founded at Alcester, in 1140, by Ralph Boteler; but about the year 1467, its revenue being much impaired, it was made a cell to the abbey of Evesham, a monastery of the same order, in Worcestershire. It stood on a spot now called Priory Close, which was

then an island, formed by the river Arrow on the north and east, and a moat on the other sides. The moat is still discernible, though partly filled up and hidden by underwood.

" Here once a self-sequester'd train
Renounc'd life's tempting pomp and glare;
Rejected pow'r, relinquish'd gain,
And shunn'd the great, and shunn'd the fair;
The voluntary slaves of toil,
By day they till'd their little soil,
By night awoke, and rose to pray'r.
" Though superstition much we blame,
That bade them thus consume their years;
Their motive still our praise must claim,
Their constancy our thought reveres:
And sure their solitary scheme
Must check each passion's wild extreme,
And save them cares, and save them fears."

SCOTT.

After the dissolution, the scite of this priory became the property of Sir Fulke Greville.

Leland in his "Itinerary," written in the reign of Henry the eighth, says, "Aulcester is a pretty market town. The town hath been a great thing. Some say there hath been three parish churches in it, and that the priory, now a little without the town, by east-north-east, was in the middle of it. Many tokens of buildings and bones of men be found in places without the town, especially in Black Field.

The priory was of ancient time a great monastery, since incorporated to Evesham."

The Church at Alcester, dedicated to St. Nicholas, is situated near the centre of the town, and is a fine, large, venerable Gothic structure. The interior is handsome; and in the south aisle is a noble altar cenotaph to the memory of Sir Fulke Greville and Lady Elizabeth his wife, on which they are represented in recumbent postures.

There are *Meeting-houses* in the town for different denominations of Dissenters.

A Free School was founded at Alcester, in the reign of Elizabeth, by Walter Newport, who left by his will four hundred pounds for that purpose. There are also eight alms houses here, for aged men and women.

The Market-hall at Alcester is a plain but convenient building, in which the lord of the manor (Marquis of Hertford) holds his courts. The lower part of it forms a colonade for the use of the market people.

The Market is on Tuesday; and *Fairs* are annually held here on the Thursday before April 5, May 18, second Tuesday in July, and October 17.

Alcester is noted for its manufacture of needles, by which at least six hundred persons are supported. The process of needle-making is very curious; the eye of a needle, insignificant as it appears, is punched four times; and before the needle is finished and

offered for sale, it passes through forty pair of hands, notwithstanding which, many are sold at 3*s.* 6*d.* per thousand, but some as much as ten shillings.

According to the returns of 1811, Alcester contains 411 houses, and 1,862 inhabitants.

Ragley Hall, the noble residence of the Marquis of Hertford, is beautifully situated on an eminence, commanding admirable views, about a mile from Alcester. The mansion is of stone, and was built about the middle of the last century, by Lord Conway, ancestor of the present noble owner. It has, however, recently been greatly improved; and now forms one of the most magnificent mansions in the county. His Royal Highness the Prince Regent and others of the royal family, have paid several visits to this delightful place. The rooms in the interior of the mansion are very fine, the hall in particular is superb, and hung with valuable paintings. The park is extensive and beautiful, enlivened by numerous herds of deer, and enriched by a fine lake of water. The whole domain is abundantly furnished with wood, and adorned by groups of stately trees, of venerable aspect; and the regard shewn here to these venerable tenants of the forest, by not having the axe applied to their roots, is very laudable, and much more worthy of imitation than the havoc and devastation often committed by the application of that destructive instrument. The Marquis of Hertford is at the present Lord Lieutenant of the county of Warwick.

Beauchamp's Court, the residence of the Beauchamp and Greville families, Lords of Alcester, stood near the river Arrow, a short distance from Alcester. Its scite is now occupied by a farm house, which belongs to the Marquis of Hertford.

At ARROW, about a mile from Alcester, a family named Burdet resided for many ages, in a mansion, surrounded by a park stocked with deer. Thomas Burdet, who resided here in the reign of Edward the fourth, was beheaded for the following trivial words, which it was natural enough for an angry man to speak: the account of which, we take from Sir R. Baker's "Chronicle of the Kings of England," and he gives it as an instance of the severity practised in that reign. "It happened that King Edward, hunting in his (meaning Mr. Burdet's) park, he being from home, and there killed a white buck, whereof Mr. Burdet made special account: so as coming home, and finding that buck killed, he wished it, horns and all, in his belly that had counselled the King to kill it: and because none counselled the King to kill it but himself, it was thought those words were not spoken without a malignant reflection upon the King: and thereupon Burdet was arraigned and condemned, drawn to Tiburn, and there beheaded: though Markham, then chief justice, chose rather to lose his place, than assent to the judgment."

At OVERSLEY, in the parish of Arrow, was formerly a castle, built by Ralph Boteler, who resided here, and who founded the benedictine mo-

nastery at Alcester. This castle was in a state of dilapidation in the time of Dugdale, who informs us, that by its ruins "the strength and compass it was of, may seem to have been of no mean consideration."

COUGHTON, a small village, is situated about two miles from Alcester. The ancient mansion belonging to the Throckmorton family at this place, was erected, it is supposed, about the reign of Henry the eighth. The venerable turreted gateway to this edifice, Mr. Tindall observes, in his "History of Evesham," is reported with some probability to have once made a part of Evesham abbey, and to have been removed from thence by Sir George Throckmorton, at the dissolution. Dugdale merely says, "that it was built by Sir George Throckmorton, who intended that the rest of the house should be finished in the same style." The rest of the mansion, however, by no means equals the venerable style of the gateway. The Throckmorton arms are on two parts of the front, one appears to have been fixed on of late years, and the other appears coeval with the building. The additions under the arch are certainly of a modern date. Mr. Tindall observes, that he had often heard a gentleman of Evesham assert, that he had the information of the removal of the gateway from Evesham, from the mouth of Sir Robert Throckmorton; but, however, was the fact of its removal true, surely the indefatigable Dugdale would have mentioned so remarkable a circumstance. It remains

to be noticed, that (allowing its removal) the gateway could not have been removed *all-together*, and therefore must have been *taken to pieces*, and probably not erected again exactly in the same manner.

The church at Coughton is dedicated to St. Peter, and the windows are adorned with painted glass from Evesham abbey. In the chancel are some fine monuments of the Throckmorton family; and the church, on the whole, is well worthy the notice of the antiquary.

In the parish of HASELER, about three miles east from Alcester, is the hamlet of UPTON, relative to which Sir William Dugdale relates a very remarkable story, which, as many persons are fond of the marvellous, we transcribe for the amusement of our readers. "Southward from Haseler (but within the same parish) is a coppice wood, and in it a notable hill, which is of such a steep and equall ascent from every side as if it had been artificially made, so that it is a very eminent mark over all that part of the country, and by the common people called Alcock's Arbour. Towards the foot whereof is a hole, now almost filled up, having been the entrance into a cave, as the inhabitants report: of which cave there is an old wives' story, that passes for current among the people of the adjacent towns, viz. that one Alcock, a great robber, used to lodge therein, and having got much money by that course of life, hid it in an iron-bound chest, whereunto were three

keys; which chest they say is still there, but guarded by a cock, that continually sits upon it: and that on a time, an Oxford scholar came thither with a key that opened two of the locks; but as he was attempting to open the third, the cock seized him. To all which they adde, that if one bone of the partie, who set the cock there, could be brought, he would yield up the chest." [Our readers, with us, will doubtless smile at this truly wonderful story; at the same time, perhaps, it may excite some credulous *knight-errant* to make a journey hither, to attempt the accomplishment of this feat.]

Dugdale likewise informs us, that near the above-mentioned place is "Grove Hill, whence issueth a very pleasant spring, which anciently bore the name of Caldwell, being remarkable for an hermitage that stood close by it, and at the foundation of Alcester priorie, by Ralph Boteler, of Oversley, in King Stephen's time, was by him given thereto."

ASTON CANTLOW is situated about four miles N. E. by E. from Alcester, and derived its latter appellation from William de Cantilupe, a man of great power, who resided here in the reign of King John. There was formerly a castle and park here, supposed to have been erected by the same powerful person; but there are no remains of it, and Dugdale informs us, that "the moat and banks thereof, are now so levelled that there is scarce any appearance of it." The same William de Cantilupe obtained a

charter for a market and annual fair to be held here; they have, however, long been discontinued.

STUDLEY is a neat village, agreeably situated on the banks of the river Arrow, about four miles from Alcester.

A priory for canons regular of the order of St. Augustine, was founded here in the reign of King Stephen, by Peter de Corbicon, alias Studley, and was enriched by numerous benefactions. A complaint was lodged against a *holy brother* of this monastery, in the reign of Henry the seventh, by Thomas Atwode, the heir of the founder, in a petition to the Bishop of Worcester, "wherein he complains against Thomas Bedull, the then prior, for keeping a paramour here; viz. Joane, wife to one John Greene, by the connivance of her husband; to which Joane he sundry times resorted in secular apparel, allowing her meat, malt, wool, and other things, whereby the monastery was much impoverished." At the dissolution, the revenue of this priory was £125 4 8 per annum, above all reprises, and it was dissolved with the other lesser religious houses, by act of parliament, in the twenty-seventh of Henry the eighth.

The church at Studley was built by the monks in the fourteenth century, and is the only part of the monastic buildings remaining. Several of the Knotsford family, to whom the manor of Studley formerly belonged, are interred in the church.

Dugdale informs us, that there was formerly a castle at Studley, and that some relics of it remained in his time.

BIDFORD, a considerable village, is pleasantly situated on the banks of the Avon, over which is a stone bridge of nine arches, about six miles from Alcester, and six from Stratford-upon-Avon. This place was, in the reign of Edward the confessor, a demesne of the crown, and afterwards belonged to Llewelyn, Prince of Wales, who obtained, in the reign of Henry the third, a charter for a weekly market, to be held here on the Tuesday, afterwards altered to Friday; but at present it is quite discontinued. Annual fairs are held here on April 14, and September 8.

Bidford church is pleasantly situated on an eminence, and is a large ancient structure, principally in the Saxon style of architecture. It formerly had two side aisles; the north one is now down, but the arches, that divided it from the nave, are very visible on the outside. The interior of the church is gloomy, and has several Saxon pillars, some remains of painted glass, a few tablets, and other monumental records. The tower, situated at the west end, appears very ancient, but is much mutilated; it contains a clock and six bells. The church-yard, from its being considerably elevated, with the river Avon gliding immediately on its side, is rendered very pleasant. In it, on the south side of the church, are considerable

remains of an old cross, which appears to have been large and handsome; and near the west wall of the church-yard is a small stone, to the memory of Peyton, son of Sir Grey Skipwith, who died in 1814, aged eighteen months.

The spacious mansion in this parish, called *Bidford Grange*, formerly belonging to Bordesley abbey, Worcestershire, is of considerable antiquity; it is now converted into two residences, one occupied by the clergyman of the parish, and the other by a farmer.

About half a mile from Bidford, on the side of the road leading to Stratford-upon-Avon, is an old crab tree, known by the name of *Shakespeare's Crab Tree*, and respecting which there is a curious anecdote on record, relative to our immortal bard, which we shall relate from the Gentleman's Magazine of December, 1794:—

"There has been long a tradition in Warwickshire, that our great dramatic bard was a very boon companion; and the fame of two illustrious bands of good fellows, who were distinguished by the denominations of the TOPERS and the SIPPERS, is not yet extinct in that county. The TOPERS, who were the stoutest fellows of the two, challenged all England, it is said, to contest with them in deep potations of the good old English beverage; a challenge which Shakespeare, and a party of his young friends at Stratford, readily accepted; but going on a Whit-

Sunday to meet them at Bidford, a village about seven miles distant, they were much mortified to find that the TOPERS had that very day (owing to some misunderstanding of the place and time appointed) gone to a neighbouring fair, on a similar scheme with that which brought Shakespeare and his friends to Bidford. Being thus disappointed, they were obliged to take up with the SIPPERS, whom they found at that village, but whom they held in great contempt. On trial, however, the Stratfordians proved so unequal to the combat, that they were obliged to yield; and, while they had yet the use of their legs, they set out towards home. Unfortunately our great poet's head, and that of one of his friends, not being so strong as that of their companions, they found themselves unable to proceed; and laying themselves down, they took up their rest for the night, under the shelter of a large wide-spreading crab tree. When they awoke in the morning, his friend proposed that they should return to the place of combat; but being probably weary of his company, he refused. Farewell, therefore, he exclaimed,

Piping Pebworth, dancing Marston,
Haunted Hilbro', hungry Grafton,
Dodging Exhall, Popish Wicksford,
Beggarly Brome, and drunken Bidford!

The rhymes are certainly not so exact as he would have made in his closet, but, as *field measures*, they may do well enough; and the epithets are strongly

characteristic of his manner, being peculiarly and happily adapted to the several villages whence the miscellaneous group of SIPPERS had resorted to Bidford."

The writer of this article in the Gentleman's Magazine, says, that the preceding anecdote was well authenticated by a clergyman, a native of Warwickshire, who died at Stratford, at a very advanced age. It seems doubtful, however, whether the above lines were the production of Shakespeare; and, as no further proof has been brought, we cannot vouch for the truth of the story.

Hewell Grange, the seat of the Earl of Plymouth, is about ten miles from Alcester. This mansion was built in 1712, and is very large and handsome, containing numerous elegant apartments. It is surrounded by a finely wooded park, strikingly diversified with hill and vale, and enlivened by a noble piece of water, which covers an extent of thirty acres.

Journey from Alcester, through Stratford-upon-Avon and Shipston, to Long Compton.

On leaving Alcester we cross the river Alne by a stone bridge, and from thence nothing particular claims the attention till we arrive at STRATFORD-UPON-AVON, a place so well known as the birth and burial-place of the immortal Shakespeare. It is delightfully situated on the banks of the Avon, 8 miles from Warwick, 8 from Alcester, 22 from Birmingham, and 94 from London.

Stratford is of very remote antiquity; and we gather from historical records, that, three hundred years prior to the Norman conquest, there was a monastery at this place, which was in the possession of Æthelard, a Viceroy of the Wiccians, who exchanged it with St. Egwin, the third Bishop of Worcester, for a monastery at Fladbury, in that county, and that this place, for many ages afterwards, continued in the possession of the Bishops of Worcester. It appears this monastery was founded soon after the conversion of the Saxons to the Christian religion, but we have no certain information when it was dissolved; the monks were, however, probably expelled in the reign of Edgar or Edward the martyr, as about that time Elfer, a powerful Earl of Mercia, having imbibed a rancorous hatred against monks, expelled

them from all the convents in his province. The old monastery was situated upon the bank of the Avon, from which circumstance, Leland supposes the present collegiate church to have been erected upon its scite.

At the time of the conqueror's survey, Stratford contained fourteen hides and a half, and was in the possession of Wulstan, the twenty-fifth Bishop of Worcester. At that time there was a church, and a mill yielding ten shillings per annum and a thousand eels. In the seventh of Richard the first, John de Constantus, the the thirty-sixth Bishop of Worcester, obtained a charter for a weekly market to be held at Stratford upon Thursday; and several of the succeeding Bishops obtained charters for fairs to be held here.

It appears that the Bishops of Worcester had a park at this place; and Bishop Gifford, in 1280, sent his injunctions to the Deans of Stratford, Warwick, Hampton, Blockley, and Stow, solemnly to excommunicate all those that had broke his park and stole his deer.

The market established at Stratford becoming much neglected, Walter de Maydenstone, Bishop of Worcester, procured a new charter for a market on the same day. In the fifth of Edward the third, Robert de Stratford, rector of the church, procured a patent to take toll for the space of four years, upon sundry vendible commodities brought to the town for sale, for the purpose of defraying the ex-

pense of paving the streets; and at his request the patent was twice renewed, for four years, and two years, till the project was completed.

In the reign of Edward the sixth, Nicholas Heath, Bishop of Worcester, transferred the manor of Stratford to John Dudley, Earl of Warwick, afterwards Duke of Northumberland, for some lands in Worcestershire, but upon Northumberland's attainder, it was forfeited to the crown; however, it was afterwards restored to the Dudleys, and again reverted to the crown in the reign of James the first, where it continued till the reign of Charles the second, who conveyed it to Charles, Earl of Dorset and Middlesex, whose descendant, the present Duke of Dorset, is lord of the manor.

In 1564, Stratford was most dreadfully visited by the plague, when more than one-seventh of its inhabitants died; and a short time after that, it suffered several dreadful conflagrations, two of which happened in the thirty-sixth and thirty-seventh of the reign of Elizabeth, when two hundred houses were consumed, and property destroyed to the amount of twenty thousand pounds. Another happened in 1614, which in less than two hours consumed fifty-five houses.

In the early part of the civil war, in the reign of Charles the first, a party of the royalists were stationed at Stratford, but they were obliged to quit the town after a short skirmish with some troops

of the parliament under Lord Brooke. When the parliamentarians had obtained the town, they demolished one of the arches of the bridge over the Avon, to prevent the incursions of their opponents; however, the royalists soon after again gained possession of the town, and Henrietta Maria, Queen of Charles the first, kept her court here for three weeks in 1643. She entered the town in triumph on June 22, at the head of three thousand foot and one thousand five hundred horse, with a large quantity of stores and ammunition; here she was soon afterwards joined by Prince Rupert, with a large body of troops, and after staying three weeks, during which time she resided at New Place, formerly the residence of Shakespeare, she on July 13, proceeded to meet the King in the vale of Kineton, under Edge Hill, and from thence they proceeded to Oxford.

Stratford is a very airy and healthy town, and consists principally of twelve handsome and well paved streets; most of the wooden houses were destroyed by the different fires we have mentioned; but some curious specimens of the ancient grotesque architecture still remain. Many of the modern houses are large and handsome.

Stratford had formerly much trade, owing to its situation on the river Avon, which is navigable from hence to Tewkesbury, where it blends with the Severn; but having now lost its woollen trade, and there being no manufactories of consequence in the

place, it would lose all its importance, was it not for the circumstance of its having given birth to Shakespeare, the pride of England; and to the numerous persons visiting the town on this account, it owes its present flourishing state.

The government of Stratford, which is a corporate town but never sent members to parliament, is vested in a mayor, recorder, high steward, 12 aldermen, and 12 burgesses; the charter under which they act, was granted by Charles the second.

The Church at Stratford stands in a fine situation, at the southern extremity of the town, near the Avon. It is a noble, venerable structure, and was formerly collegiate; it is built in the form of a cross, and consists of a nave, side aisles, transept, and chancel. The tower is supposed to be as old as the conquest; but the rest of the fabric appears to have been built at different periods. The tower is surmounted by a handsome octagonal spire, of stone, which was built in 1763, at which period the old timber one, covered with lead, was taken down, on account of its decayed state. There is a peal of six musical bells in the tower, and its altitude, with the spire, is one hundred and sixty-three feet. The nave presents a handsome appearance, and is divided from the side aisles by six hexagonal pillars, terminating in pointed arches, above which, on each side, are twelve Gothic windows. The transept is divided from the nave by folding doors, and separated from the chancel by a

screen. According to Dugdale, the transept was erected by the executors of Sir Hugh Clopton, about the close of the fifteenth century; but Mr. Wheeler, in his "History of Stratford," observes, that it appears to be of equal antiquity with the tower; and supposes that the donation of fifty pounds, in Sir Hugh's will, was expended in the temporary repairs of the transept, and other parts of the church. The chancel is by far the most beautiful part of the whole structure, and was erected in the fifteenth century, by Thomas Balshall, D. D. warden of the college here. It is lighted by five beautiful Gothic windows on each side, and one at the east end; these were formerly adorned with fine painted glass. At the eastern end of the north aisle is a small chapel, dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, which contains some handsome monuments to the memory of the Clopton family. One of these is an altar tomb, without any effigy or inscription, supposed to be a cenotaph for Sir Hugh Clopton, a native of Stratford, and Lord Mayor of London in the reign of Henry the seventh. Against the north wall is another tomb, to the memory of William Clopton, Esq. and Anne his wife, whose figures are represented in recumbent postures, carved in white marble. Against the east wall of this chapel is the superb monument of George Carew, Earl of Totness and Baron of Clopton, and his Countess, whose figures are represented on the tomb in alabaster, coloured to resemble life; they lie under

a fine lofty arch, richly ornamented, supported by pillars of the Corinthian order; and a profusion of ornaments, in bass relief, decorate the monument, representing angels and cherubims, arms, warlike accoutrements, &c. There are several monuments in the chancel, worthy attention; among these is the tomb of John Combe, Esq. whose effigy is represented in a long gown, with a book in his hand, lying under an arch, supported by pillars of the Corinthian order. This is the wealthy usurer, of whom it is related, that, being at a party in company with Shakespeare, he jocosely observed, that he supposed the poet intended to write his epitaph, if he outlived him; and as, in that case, he should lose the benefit of the composition, he begged, as a favour, that he might know immediately what Shakespeare would say of him; the poet, accordingly, presented him with the following lines:—

"Ten in the hundred lies here engrav'd,
'Tis a hundred to ten his soul is not sav'd;
If any man ask, 'Who lies in this tomb?'
Oh! Oh! quoth the devil, 'tis my John-a-Combe."

But what claims the chief notice and veneration of the pilgrim visiting this hallowed pile, is the monument of Shakespeare! This is placed against the north wall of the chancel, and consists of a bust of the immortal bard, placed between two Corinthian columns of black marble, with gilded bases and capitals, supporting the entablature, on which are

placed his armorial bearings, surmounted by a death's head; and on each side is the figure of a boy in a sitting posture, one holding a spade, and the other with an inverted torch in his left hand and resting his right on a skull. The inscriptions are as follow:—

Judicio Pylivm, Genio Socratem, Arte Maronem,
Terra Tegit, Popvlus Mæret, Olympvs Habet.

Popvlvs.

Stay, Passenger, why goest thov by so fast,
Read, if thov canst, whom enviovs death hath plast,
Within this monument, Shakespeare, with whome
Quick nature dide; whose name doth deck ys. tombe
Far more than cost; sich all yt. he hath writt,
Leaves living art, bvt page to serve his witt.

Obiit Ano. Doi. 1616. Ætatis 53, die. 23 Ap.

Doubts have arisen whether the bust on this monument bears any real resemblance to Shakespeare; some persons, however, have pretended to see a likeness between it and the print prefixed to the first folio edition of his works, which Ben Johnson so much applauds, whilst others cannot discover the least resemblance between them; and indeed, after all the ingenious reasoning on this subject, it is most probable that it is not an accurate likeness of Shakespeare.—This bust was originally coloured to resemble life, and before the colouring was obliterated by the hand of innovation and painted white, it is thus described by Mr. Wheeler in his 'History of Stratford.'

"The eyes were of a light hazel, and the hair and beard auburn. The dress consisted of a scarlet doublet, over which was a loose black gown without sleeves: the upper part of the cushion before him was of a crimson colour, and the lower part green with gilt tassels." Perhaps we cannot better describe the story of the alteration, than in the words of Mr. Warner in his 'Northern Tour.' "The bust had been originally coloured as near to nature and reality in the complexion, hair, and dress, as possible; but time having faded the colours considerably, the manager of a company of comedians, which were performing in Stratford about fifty-five years ago, in the enthusiasm of his zeal for the memory of the bard, determined to rescue his Apollo from the dinginess of his appearance, and to dress him out in fresh decorations. He accordingly dedicated one night towards raising a fund for the purpose; the house was well attended, and a pretty large surplus remained for the adornment of the bust. But as the vanity of this Thespis was not inferior to his admiration of Shakespeare, he resolved to make the projected improvements commemorative of himself, as well as the poet; and accordingly directed Pallet to accommodate his colours to the dress and hair, eyes and complexion of himself. Cruel Mr. Malone! who could thus obliterate the only vestiges by which this poor son of the buskin might hope to hand himself down to posterity." It seems that Mr. Malone, on taking a cast of the

bust, damaged the colouring, and in consequence, "with self-assured authority," ordered it to be painted white. Below the monument is a flat stone, which covers the remains of Shakespeare, on which is the following inscription, said to have been written by himself:—

Good friend for Jesvs sake forbeare,
To digg the dvst encloased here;
Blesse be ye. man yt. spares thes stones,
And cvrst be he yt. moves my bones.

Near the remains of Shakespeare lie those of Anne his wife, who died the 6th of August, 1623, aged 67; and of Susannah Hall, his daughter, wife of John Hall, gent.; she died the 11th of July, 1649, aged 66.

Under the north wall of the chancel is an ancient altar tomb of alabaster, supposed to have been erected to the memory of Dean Balshall, warden of the college and founder of the chancel, who died in 1491.

In the fifth of Edward the third, John de Stratford, then Bishop of Winchester, and afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, founded a chantry in the chapel of St. Thomas the Martyr, adjoining the south aisle of this church, for a warden and four priests; and Ralph de Stratford, in the twenty-sixth year of the same reign, erected for their habitation a large stone building (afterwards called the *College*), which stood on the west side of the church. At the dissolution, the revenue was valued at £127 18 9, according to

Dugdale; but, according to Speed, it was £123 11 9, per annum, and the buildings of the college were granted by Edward the sixth to John Dudley, Earl of Warwick, afterwards Duke of Northumberland. On the attainder of this nobleman, they were forfeited to the crown, and were afterwards sold to John Combe, Esq. who made it his principal residence. After Mr. Combe's death they passed through various hands; and the building having been much improved, formed a noble mansion; but coming by purchase, in 1796, to Edmund Battersbee, Esq. of Stratford, he caused the whole building to be taken down in 1799 and 1800.

Formerly a building, called the *Charnel House*, stood contiguous to the church, which was nearly the height of the chancel, and from its plain Saxon architecture was evidently coeval with the ancient monastery. This building was filled with an immense quantity of human bones, which must have been deposited there for ages, but it is supposed this custom was discontinued at the reformation. From the sight of this vast collection of fragments of mortality, Shakespeare is supposed to have imbibed a detestation of the custom of removing bones to the charnel house, and this probably suggested to him the lines placed on his grave-stone. There is an anecdote, that notwithstanding the anathema pronounced by the bard on any disturber of his bones, the churchwardens were so negligent, a few years ago, as to

suffer the sexton, in digging the adjoining grave of Dr. Davenport, to break a large cavity into the tomb of Shakespeare. A gentleman was excited by curiosity to push his head and shoulders through the excavation, and related that he saw the remains of the poet, and could easily have brought away his skull, but was deterred by the curse invoked by Shakespeare on any one who disturbed his remains! The charnel house being in a very decayed state, the Bishop of Worcester, at the request of the churchwardens, granted a faculty for its demolition, and, in consequence, the bones were carefully covered over, and the building taken down in 1800.

The approach to the church, from the entrance of the church-yard, is shaded by lime trees, bent into an arbour, having a pleasing effect.

The Chapel, which anciently belonged to the gild of the Holy Cross, at Stratford, is a handsome Gothic structure, originally erected in 1443, but was rebuilt, except the chancel, in the reign of Henry the seventh, at the expense of Sir Hugh Clopton, Knight. This gild, or fraternity, had subsisted at Stratford for a long period of time; and, in 1269, Robert de Stratford, and the brethren and sisters of this fraternity, obtained permission of Godfrey Giffard, Bishop of Worcester, to found an hospital and erect a chapel for their use. At the dissolution, there were four priests belonging to this gild, each of whom received an annual allowance of £5 6 8; and

a clerk or schoolmaster, who received £10 6 0 per annum. The possessions of the gild reverted to the crown at the dissolution, where they remained till the seventh of Edward the sixth, when they were granted to the corporation of Stratford, for the purpose of applying the revenue of them to certain charitable uses. In the interior of the chapel, against the south wall, is a monument to Sir Hugh Clopton, the refounder of this structure. In 1804, this building underwent considerable repairs, when it was discovered that the interior surface of the walls was adorned with curious fresco paintings, which had been hidden by several coats of whitewash. Those in the chancel, eleven in number, represented "various passages in the legend of the holy cross," but being in plaster were destroyed in the reparation. Those in the body of the chapel, being painted on stone, still remain, and represent "the resurrection, the day of judgment, the combat of St. George, and the murder of Becket."

The Guild Hall immediately adjoins the chapel, and was erected by Robert de Stratford, for the use of the ecclesiastical fraternity before-mentioned, having obtained permission for that purpose, in 1296, of Godfrey Giffard, Bishop of Worcester. The lower apartments of this building are now used by the corporation to transact public business in, and to deposit their records, manuscripts, &c.; and in the upper rooms is a *Free Grammar School*, founded in the

reign of Henry the sixth, by a priest named Jolepe, a member of the gild, and a native of Stratford. The possessions belonging to the gild having been seized by the crown, King Edward the sixth restored them by charter, to the inhabitants of Stratford, on condition of applying their revenue to various charitable uses, one of which was the support of the above grammar school. It is free for all boys who are natives of Stratford, and it is supposed that Shakespeare received his education here. According to the charter, the master, as long as he continues in his office, is furnished with a dwelling house, and receives twenty pounds per annum from the corporation; but this salary has been recently increased.

Adjoining the guild hall is a row of *Alms Houses*, in which formerly twenty-four poor persons were maintained by the gild; they are now maintained by the same revenue that supports the grammar school, and are occupied by twelve poor men and twelve poor women.

The Town Hall, or *Shakespeare's Hall*, is a handsome structure, of the Tuscan order, erected in 1768, in the room of a more ancient one, first built in 1633. The north front is ornamented by a well-executed statue of Shakespeare, which was the gift of the celebrated Garrick; the bard is represented leaning upon a pillar, and pointing to a scroll, on which are inscribed the following lines, from the Midsummer Night's Dream:—

"The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven;
And, as imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
Turns them to shapes; and gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name."

The pedestal beneath bears the following quotation from Hamlet:—

"———————— take him for all in all,
We shall not look upon his like again."

Beneath is the following inscription:—

"The corporation and inhabitants of Stratford, assisted by the munificent contributions of the nobility and gentlemen of the neighbourhood, rebuilt this edifice in the year 1768. The statue of Shakespeare, and his picture within, were given by David Garrick, Esq."

The grand room in this edifice is sixty feet in length, and thirty in width, and is adorned by three fine paintings; one, of Shakespeare, by Wilson; second, a full-length portrait of Garrick, by Gainsborough, both of these were presented to the corporation by that great actor; and the third, is a portrait of John Frederick, Duke of Dorset, presented by his Duchess.

The Market House, commonly called *The Cross*, at Stratford, is an ancient building, and is conjectured to have been erected prior to the reformation. It is

situated near the centre of the town, and within it are the remains of an old cross.

The Bridge, which crosses the Avon at Stratford, is of stone, 376 yards in length, and consists principally of fourteen arches. It has recently been beautified, and rendered much more safe than formerly, as it has, by a very excellent and ingenious expansion of the breakwater buttresses, been much widened. We, however, observe, that a pillar, placed on the third pier from the east end, on which were the arms of the city of London and the Clopton family, with the following inscription:—"Sir Hugh Clopton, Knight, Lord Mayor of London, built this bridge at his own proper expense, in the reign of King Henry ye. seventh," has been removed; but presume it will soon be replaced.

We must not omit to mention the house in which Shakespeare first drew breath. This is situated in Henley-street, and is now divided into two; the northern part forming a butcher's shop, and the southern being a public house, called the Swan and Maidenhead. The latter, about ten years ago, was new fronted with brick, but the other part retains it old front. The room in which the bard was born is small, and of a dreary appearance; every part of the ceiling and walls is covered with names of persons, written by themselves, who have visited this apartment. Mrs. Hornby, the woman who occupies the house containing this room, has several curious

relics, which she says belonged to Shakespeare, and, as such, shews them to visitors. This house was bequeathed by Shakespeare in his will to his sister Joan, who was married to a person named Hart, and it continued in the possession of that family till the year 1806, when it was sold; but being very deeply mortgaged, only twenty pounds were left, after all expenses were paid, for the heir of the property, William Shakespeare Hart, who is a journeyman chair-maker, at Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire; and who, though he was himself in very low circumstances, affectionately gave up the money to his mother.

New Place, in which Shakespeare resided during the latter years of his life, stood near the chapel of the gild, and was erected by Sir Hugh Clopton, in the reign of Henry the seventh. It was purchased by Shakespeare in 1597, who, having repaired and altered it, gave it the name of New Place; and, a few years previous to his death, he made it his constant residence. After the death of Shakespeare, it became the property of Mrs. Hall, his daughter, and afterwards of Elizabeth Hall, his grand-daughter, who by marriage became Lady Barnard. On her death it was sold, and, after various transmissions, became the property of Sir Hugh Clopton, recorder of Stratford, by whom it was repaired, and a modern front added to it. After the death of Sir Hugh, it was sold by his son-in-law to the Reverend Francis

Gastrell, Vicar of Frodsham, in Cheshire; who, incapable of the finer feelings of the heart, and wanting the taste duly to appreciate such a classical spot, laid his sacrilegious hands upon the mulberry tree planted by Shakespeare, and ordered it to be cut down, and cleft in pieces for fire-wood, that he might not be incommoded by the visits of the admirers of the bard, who might wish to see it. The greater part of the wood, however, was purchased by Mr. Thomas Sharpe, of Stratford, who, with much taste and ingenuity, converted it into small boxes, goblets, tobacco-stoppers, and a variety of other trinkets; and so eagerly were they bought up, and as numerously supplied, that the public began to entertain doubts that Mr. Sharpe, having expended all the original tree, had substituted other mulberry wood in its place. In consequence of this report, Mr. Sharpe issued an affidavit, in which he declared, that "he never had worked, sold, or substituted any other wood, than what came from, and was part of, the said tree, as or for mulberry wood." Mr. Gastrell, having afterwards a dispute respecting parish assessments for the maintenance of the poor, ordered New Place to be levelled with the ground, and the materials sold: this took place in 1759. And now the *Reverend Mr. Gastrell*, having completely lost the *reverence* and good opinion of the inhabitants of Stratford, and filled them with indignation and disgust, thought proper to leave the town. The scite of New Place

was sold in 1775, by Mrs. Gastrell, and was added to the garden adjoining it.

S ratford has a well-attended *Market* on Fridays; and *Fairs* are annually held here on the last Monday in February, the Friday after March 25, May 14, last Monday in July, September 25, second Friday after September 25, and the Wednesday after December 11.

According to the returns made to parliament in 1811, Stratford contains 720 houses, and 3,694 inhabitants.

We now come to mention the *Eminent Men* to whom Stratford has given birth, and shall first notice three eminent prelates, of the same family, of the name of Stratford, who all flourished in the reign of Edward the third.

John de Stratford, Archbishop of Canterbury, was born in this town, but the date of his birth is not known. He pursued his studies at Oxford, and, when but young, was preferred to the Archdeaconry of Lincoln, in which station, conducting himself in a prudent manner, Walter Reynolds, Archbishop of Canterbury, made him Dean of the Arches, and his merit becoming known to the King, he was made a member of the privy council. Happening to be ambassador to the Pope when the Bishop of Winchester died, the pontiff bestowed the bishopric upon Stratford, at the request of the Archbishop of Canterbury. But Robert Baldock, Lord Chancellor, to

whom the King had intended to give the bishopric, being thus disappointed, used all his influence with the King against Stratford, and, in consequence, all the profits of his bishopric were sequestered, and proclamations issued that no man should harbour him, or give him even the food necessary to preserve life. However, by the intercession of the Pope, and his old friend Archbishop Reynolds, he was restored to favour; and so faithful did he prove to the unfortunate Edward the second, that he alone adhered to him when all his other friends had forsaken him. For this conduct, he was again compelled to be a fugitive, but was soon after restored to favour, and made Lord Chancellor of England. Having been ten years Bishop of Winchester, and the Archbishop of Canterbury dying, the Pope, at the request of King Edward the third, translated him to that archbishopric, and he was consecrated December 1, 1333. The King now leaving the kingdom, to prosecute the war with France, left the government of the realm to Archbishop Stratford, during his absence; but the King having expended in one year an immense sum of money, which had been collected from the people, and which was expected to have lasted *several* years, sent to the Archbishop for more, who remonstrated with him, that so large a sum of money could not have been expended in so short a time, without its being embezzled by some persons, and recommended the King to make peace, as he thought it impossible

to get a farther supply. The King, enraged at this, told his soldiers that the Archbishop had betrayed him to the French King, and returned in high displeasure to England. From this circumstance, Archbishop Stratford endured many difficulties and persecutions, which our limits will not permit us to detail; but at length, by his letters to the King justifying himself, the intercession of his friends, and humbling himself before his Majesty, he was re-admitted into favour. After this he lived seven years; and having presided over the see of Canterbury about fifteen years, he died in 1348, and was buried in Canterbury cathedral, where there is a noble monument to his memory.

Robert de Stratford, Bishop of Chichester, younger brother of the preceding, was born at Stratford, but the date of his birth is likewise unknown. He was a member of the gild of the holy cross, at Stratford, and superintended the erection of their chapel, guild-hall, &c. His first ecclesiastical preferment, of any note, was to the Archdeaconry of Canterbury; and in 1333, his brother, the Archbishop, who was Lord Chancellor, gave him the custody of the great seal, with the title of keeper; but he soon afterwards resigned it. In 1335, the great seal was again delivered to him; but in September, the same year, the Bishop of Durham succeeded him in the custody of it. In 1336, he was made Lord Chancellor of England; and in 1337, was appointed to the bishopric of

Chichester, in consequence of which he gave up the office of Lord Chancellor. The troubles of his brother happening about this time, he was committed to the tower, with the Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, but they were soon after released. After this he was made Chancellor of the university of Oxford; and while he was in that office, a terrible commotion happened in the university, which being divided into two factions, called the northern and southern students, the former, having received many injuries from the latter, retired to Stamford, in Lincolnshire; however, by the skilful management of Chancellor Stratford, they were brought back, and peace and order re-established. He died April 9, 1362, having been Bishop of Chichester twenty-five years.

Ralph de Stratford, Bishop of London, was nephew to the before-mentioned prelates, and was likewise born at Stratford. He was first a canon of St. Paul's cathedral, London; and upon the death of Richard Bentworth, Bishop of that see, he was made Bishop, being consecrated March 12, 1339. In 1353, this prelate obtained letters patent from the King to erect a mansion at his native place, for the residence of the chantry priests (afterwards called the college), and which was situated on the west side of the church-yard. He died in 1353, having been Bishop of London fourteen years.

It is, however, from SHAKESPEARE, who was born at Stratford, that the town derives its great

celebrity; and we now proceed to give a concise account of his life.

William Shakespeare was born on April 23, 1564, of respectable parents, his father being a wool-stapler, and in the register and public writings relating to Stratford, he is mentioned as "a gentleman of good figure and fashion." He had ten children, of whom the poet was the eldest, who, at a proper time, was sent to the free grammar school of the town, where it is supposed he acquired all the classical knowledge he possessed; but it appears he was early removed from thence, and placed, according to Mr. Malone's opinion, in the office of some country attorney, or as the seneschal of some manor court, where it is probable he picked up those technical law phrases that so frequently occur in his plays; other writers, however, state, that he was removed from school to assist his father in the wool business. Before he was nineteen years of age, he married Anne Hathaway, who was eight years older than himself, daughter of a substantial yeoman of Shottery, in the parish of Stratford, by whom he had three children before he was out of his minority. In this domestic obscurity he continued for some time, till happening to become acquainted with some young men who were in the habit of deer-stealing, he thoughtlessly accompanied them in an expedition to Sir Thomas Lucy's park, at Charlecote, near Stratford, and having repeated this offence more than once, he was detected

and prosecuted by that gentleman, whom he further irritated by publishing an abusive ballad against him, which so exasperated Sir Thomas, that Shakespeare, to escape the law, left his family and business, and took refuge in London. On his arrival there he was introduced to the theatre, and thus made his first acquaintance with the play-house. It was the custom in those days for persons of both sexes to ride to the theatre on horseback, as there were but few carriages kept, except by the principal nobility; and it has been said, that before Shakespeare was engaged, he was in the habit of holding horses while the play was acting, but this story appears to be without foundation—and the fact seems to be this, as mentioned in the Monthly Magazine of Feb. 1818. That Shakespeare owed his rise in life, and his introduction to the theatre, by his accidentally holding the horse of a gentleman on his arrival in London;—his being a regular holder of horses at the theatre may, therefore, be deemed a fable. When he first came upon the stage, his success does not appear to have been very conspicuous, but the characters he performed are not known; Rowe, however, asserts, that what he acted best, was the Ghost in his own play of Hamlet! Shakespeare, though not destined to become a celebrated actor, was an inimitable author; and the never-failing attraction of his pieces brought overflowing audiences to the Globe theatre, in Southwark. He also obtained, from the excellence of his

dramatic productions, the patronage of Queen Elizabeth, who had several of his plays acted before her; and she, being an excellent judge of merit, without doubt bestowed on him both praise and remuneration. She was so highly pleased with the character of Fallstaff, in the two parts of Henry the Fourth, that she requested him to exhibit the valiant Knight in the character of a lover, on which occasion Shakespeare wrote the excellent drama of the Merry Wives of Windsor. The Earl of Southampton honoured our bard with many signal marks of his favour and friendship, and to this nobleman he dedicated his poems of "Venus and Adonis," and the "Rape of Lucrece." As an instance of the munificence of this Earl, it is asserted, that at one time he presented Shakespeare with a thousand pounds, to complete a purchase that he was extremely desirous of accomplishing! Shakespeare was very intimate with Ben Johnson, whom he first brought into notice, and Ben gives him a high character in his "Discoveries;" he was also acquainted with the other wits of the age. For some years, Shakespeare, in conjunction with others, was manager of the Globe theatre; and, having acquired a fortune equal to his moderate wishes, he left London, and passed the latter part of his life in ease and retirement at his native place, where he lived respected and beloved. He died at his house, New Place, on his birth-day, April 23, 1616, having just completed the fifty-second year of

his age, and was buried in the collegiate church at Stratford. As a dramatic writer, Shakespeare deserves the highest praise; as in originality, sublime conceptions, force and delineation, he has surpassed the poets of every age and country; but it would be quite superfluous to add our meed of praise to the just encomiums that have been universally paid to him; we shall, therefore, decline the attempt, and conclude with the observation of Pope, that "if any author deserves the name of an original, it was Shakespeare." His dramatic works were first collected and published together in 1623, by two of his fellow comedians, Heminge and Condell; but they have since undergone numerous re-publications; and to illustrate and explain them has been deemed a task not unworthy of some of the most celebrated writers England has produced.

We have hitherto neglected to speak of the celebrated *Jubilee* at Stratford, as we thought its most proper place was after the account of Shakespeare. This festival took place under the auspices of our celebrated *Roscius*, Garrick; and owed its institution to the following circumstance. The corporation of Stratford having caused an elegant box to be made out of Shakespeare's famous mulberry tree, enclosed the freedom of their town in it, and presented it to Mr. Garrick, at the same time requesting of him a bust, statue, or picture of his admired Shakespeare, to place in their town hall, then lately erected; they

also assured him, they should be no less obliged if he would favour them with his own picture, to be placed near his favourite author's, in perpetual remembrance of both. The Jubilee took place in September, 1769, and lasted three days. For the accommodation of the company, an elegant amphitheatre was erected on the Bank-croft, close to the river Avon, on the plan of Ranelagh, which was capable of containing a thousand persons. Its interior was finely decorated, and ornamented by a statue of Shakespeare, cast at the expense of Mr. Garrick purposely for the occasion, and afterwards placed in the front of the town hall. During the period of the Jubilee, every species of entertainments were exhibited, as concerts, oratorios, pageants, fire-works, illuminations, &c. It was intended to have made a theatrical procession to the amphitheatre, by one hundred and seventy persons, properly dressed, representing the principal characters in Shakespeare's pieces, with a triumphal car, &c.; but the second and third days proved so exceedingly wet, that this was obliged to be omitted. The whole company brought together on this occasion, among whom were many of the highest rank, is mentioned to have amounted to about eight hundred at the public breakfast at the town hall, one thousand five hundred at dinner, and two thousand at the oratorio, ball, and masquerade. Endeavours have been made to revive the Jubilee, but hitherto without success; and the

attempt would perhaps prove fruitless, without the support of a *Garrick*,—that great illustrator of Shakespeare.

Clopton House is situated about a mile from Stratford-upon-Avon, and was for a long period the principal residence of a family who took their name from the lordship of Clopton. Sir George Carew, who married the eldest daughter and co-heiress of William Clopton, Esq. was created, by James the first, Baron Carew, of Clopton; he was further dignified, in the first of Charles the first, by the title of Earl of Totness; and, dying in 1629, was buried in Stratford church, where there is a handsome monument to his memory. Clopton house was erected about the end of the fifteenth century; it presents an ancient appearance, and a few curious specimens of old furniture are dispersed throughout its apartments.

About a mile from Stratford, on the left of the road leading to Warwick, are *Welcombe Hills*, mentioned to have been the scene of a battle between the Britons and Saxons. Large entrenchments, forty or fifty feet in depth, called the *Dingles* and *Dells*, and various other earth works, still remain. One of the hills is entirely different from the rest; it is of a conical form, surmounted by a small tower, and from its appearance seems a work of art—probably it covers the remains of the victims slaughtered in the above battle. From the summit of this, as well as from the other hills, most delightful prospects are

obtained of the town of Stratford, the pleasing meanderings of the Avon, and a fine scope of richly wooded and highly cultivated country. Environed by these hills is a venerable mansion, called *Welcombe Lodge*, formerly belonging to the family of Combes, and at present the seat of George Lloyd, Esq. It has recently undergone very considerable alterations, and the front is handsomely finished in the Gothic style of architecture.

ALVESTON is delightfully situated upon the bank of the Avon, about two miles from Stratford. This place is so much noted for the salubrity of its air, that the late Dr. Perry styled it the *Montpelier of England.* Alveston may be called, with great propriety, an elegant rural retreat; and, from the beauty of its situation, many persons have been induced to form handsome mansions here. Among the most prominent residences are those of Sir Gray Skipwith, Bart. General Jenkinson, and William Harding, Esq.

CHARLECOTE is situated about a mile from Alveston, and three from Stratford,

"Where Avon's stream, with many a sportive turn
Exhilarates the meads."

At this place is a venerable mansion, called *Charlecote House*, the seat of the Rev. John Lucy, one of whose ancestors, Sir Thomas Lucy, who was knighted in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and was one of the representatives of this county in two par-

liaments, was the prosecutor of Shakespeare, who in a youthful frolic had stolen his deer.

Charlecote house was built by the above-mentioned Sir Thomas Lucy. It is a large handsome mansion of brick, with stone coigns; and consists of a centre and two wings, surrounded by a fine park, beautifully and richly adorned with stately trees, particularly elm, and enlivened by numerous herds of deer. The river Avon winds through the park and pleasure grounds, adding variety to the scene, and flowing silently and slowly onward to the classic walls of Stratford. The ancestors of the present possessor of these domains, who were greatly distinguished by their immense wealth and influence in this county, bore the name of Charlecote till the reign of Henry the third, when William de Charlecote assumed the name of Lucy.

The church at Charlecote was originally a chapel belonging to Wellesbourn, this village being anciently included in that parish; and though its exterior presents no remarkable appearance, its interior is adorned by several fine monuments to the memory of different branches of the Lucy family.

At THELESFORD, about a mile from Charlecote, Sir William Lucy, in the reign of Henry the eighth, founded a monastery for monks of the order of the Holy Trinity for the redemption of captives. At the dissolution, it was valued at £24 19 0 per annum, above all reprises.

About three miles from Stratford is ATHERSTON-UPON-STOUR, a small village, which has no claim to be inserted in these pages, except from its having been the residence of Dr. Thomas,* the continuator of "Dugdale's Antiquities:" we mention it, however, to inform our readers, that an error has been inserted in several works respecting this place, it being called a market town, and stated to have possessed a monastery; the fact is, that it has been confounded with another Atherston in this county, mentioned in a preceding part of our work, which *is* a market town, and once had a monastery. Atherston-upon-Stour has only nineteen houses.

MILCOTE is situated about three miles from Stratford, and, though within the boundary of this county, is a hamlet in the parish of Weston-upon-Avon, Gloucestershire. At this place was anciently a manor house, a seat of a branch of the Greville family, but scarce any remains, except part of the moat, are now visible, and a farm house has been erected on its scite. Lodowick Greville, the ambitious owner of this place in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, expended vast sums of money in erecting a castle on a hill, which he termed Mount Greville, a short distance from the old manor house. His expenses in this building having exhausted his purse, and his affairs being in an embarrassed state, he

* We refer our readers to the article *Exhall*, for an account of Dr. Thomas.

determined to recruit his finances by the murder of a rich farmer, named Webb, one of his tenants, at Drayton. Accordingly, having invited the farmer to make merry at his house, he bribed two of his servants to strangle him in bed. He then reported, that the farmer was seized with a mortal distemper, and the minister was sent for to make his will; one of the murderers was put in bed with the corpse, the curtains were drawn close, and the assassin acted the part of the supposed dying person, and signed in his name a will, by which all Webb's possessions, with the exception of one legacy to prevent suspicion, were left to Lodowick Greville. This villainous transaction, however, did not long remain unpunished; one of the accomplices dropping some suspicious words, Greville, fearful of a discovery, ordered the other accomplice to murder him, which he did, and his corpse being found, the wretch confessed his guilt. Greville and his servant were tried at Warwick, but, in order to save the forfeiture of his lands, Greville declined pleading; and was in consequence *pressed to death*, a punishment usual in former times, when criminals refused to plead. The castle was in ruins in the time of Dr. Thomas, and at present no part of it remains.

SNITTERFIELD, a very pleasant village, is situated about four miles from Stratford, and one mile to the left of the turnpike road leading to Warwick. In the reign of Henry the third, a charter

was granted for a weekly market on Wednesday, and an annual fair for three days, to be held here; but afterwards, in the reign of Richard the second, the market was altered to Tuesday, and the fair to last for eight days; they are at present both discontinued.

The manor house at Snitterfield was formerly a seat of the noble family of Coventry.

Mr. Jago, who wrote "Edge Hill," a poem, resided at Snitterfield, as vicar, for many years, and in the church here he was buried.

Continuing our journey from Stratford,—on leaving which we cross the river Avon by the stone bridge mentioned in our account of that town,—to the right of the road the seat of Lord Middleton, situated near Stratford church, appears to view: during the hunting season, this nobleman honours Stratford by his residence at this mansion, and a kennel and stables have lately been built, for his superior establishment of fox-hounds and horses. About two miles from Stratford, to the right of the road, is the mansion of ——— West, Esq.; four miles further, on the same side of the road, is a mansion, where resided the late Miss Parker; and a short distance further, to the left of the road, is a venerable mansion, called *Eatington Hall*, the seat of Evelyn John Shirley, Esq. whose ancestors resided here at the Norman conquest; and Dugdale observes of this

place, "that it is the only one in the county which glories in an uninterrupted succession of its owners for so long a tract of time." This family, which is of great antiquity, bore the name of Ferrers till the reign of Henry the third, when they took the name of Shirley, from a place of the same name that belonged to them, in Derbyshire.

Eatington hall is irregular in its exterior appearance, having been built at different periods; some parts of it, however, appear very ancient. The interior is adorned by a fine collection of paintings; a good library; a pleasing museum of birds, beasts, insects, and fossils; and a collection of old English armour. To the mansion is attached a park of considerable extent, finely adorned by trees, and enlivened with deer.

The church at this place is in ruins, and overgrown by the clinging ivy plant, which presents a picturesque appearance. The chancel is the only part entire, in which is a fine white marble monument, to the memory of Robert, Earl Ferrers, great grand-father to the present owner of Eatington hall.

Pursuing our journey, and about seven miles from Stratford, we leave, a short distance to the left of the road, the village of HALFORD, and a short distance further cross the Fosse-way. Passing through the village of TREDDINGTON, we leave, about ten miles from Stratford, to the left of the road, the seat of Gore Townsend, Esq. and one mile further arrive

at SHIPSTON-UPON-STOUR, a small market town, situated in an insulated portion of Worcestershire, which excludes it from being more fully noticed in this work; we, however, shall make this our stand to mention the places in its vicinity, claiming notice, that are in Warwickshire.

ILMINGTON is situated in this county, about three miles from Shipston. At this place is a chalybeate spring, which was some years ago in great repute; and Lord Capel, lord of the manor, gave the land about the spring to the public for ever.

COMPTON SCORFEN, in the parish of Ilmington, is mentioned by Anthony Wood to have given birth, in 1581, to *Sir Thomas Overbury*, a man well known for his elegant writings, and still more for his tragical death. He was educated at Queen's college, Oxford, and in 1598 he took the degree of bachelor of arts; he removed from thence to the Middle Temple, in order to study the municipal law, but did not long remain there, as his genius, which was of a sprightly kind, could not bear the confinement of a student, or the drudgery of reading law; he, therefore, relinquished it for literature, and the court. Afterwards he became the friend of Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset, who procured for him the honour of knighthood. In 1612 he first assisted his friend in his amour with the Countess of Essex; but, after her discovery, disapproving of his marrying her, he freely told the Earl his mind, who, forgetting the ties

of honour as well as friendship, betrayed him to his mistress, and thereby he incurred the hatred of them both, and they resolved to remove him out of the way. With this view, the Earl of Somerset obtained for him the offer of an embassy to Russia, and then prevailing upon him to refuse it, he was sent to the tower, for contempt of the King's command. Here, in September, 1613, after several ineffectual attempts, he was poisoned by means of a clyster, nor was the manner of his death discovered till about two years after. The minor instruments in his death were condemned and executed; but the Earl of Somerset and his Countess received an unmerited pardon. Sir Thomas Overbury was the author of several pieces in prose and verse, which were reprinted in 1753, in 8vo. under the title of "The Works of Sir Thomas Overbury; in prose and verse."

FOXCOTE is also a hamlet in the parish of Ilmington; and at it there is a mansion belonging to Francis Canning, Esq.

WOOLFORD, about three miles from Shipston, gave birth, in 1573, to *Sir Nathaniel Brent*, who was educated at Merton college, Oxford, of which he was chosen warden in 1621, by the influence of Dr. Abbot, Archbishop of Canterbury, whose niece he had married; and in 1629, he was knighted by Charles the first. He afterwards, siding with the Puritans, was, by his Majesty's command, deprived of his wardenship of Merton college; but when

Oxford surrendered to the parliament in 1646, he was restored, and appointed chief visitor of that University the two following years. He published a Latin and English translation of the Council of Trent, and died in 1652.

Continuing our journey from Shipston, and at the distance of about two miles, we pass, to the left of the road, the seat of Thomas Snow, Esq.; two miles further, to the left of the road, is *Weston Hall*, a spacious mansion, built in the sixteenth century, by William Sheldon, Esq. who also enclosed here a park of three hundred acres. Lord Clonmel now resides at Weston hall.

The above-mentioned Mr. Sheldon, who died in 1570, was the first who introduced tapestry weaving into England. He had a curious series of maps, of the different counties of England, wove under his direction, and lined his hall here with them. They were purchased by Mr. Horace Walpole, for thirty guineas, when the furniture and library at Weston were sold, in 1781. Mr. Walpole presented them to Earl Harcourt, and they are carefully preserved, in a spacious room built expressly for their reception, at Nuneham Courtney, the seat of that nobleman. These maps are so well executed, that the rivers, hills, clumps of trees, and even windmills are particularly expressed, and with much art in their execution.

About one mile further, and five from Shipston, we arrive at LONG COMPTON, situated at the

southern extremity of the county, and contains 157 houses, and 757 inhabitants. It is also called *Compton in the Hole*, from its situation in a valley, as well as Long Compton from its shape.

A charter for a market, to be held here on Mondays, was obtained in the reign of Henry the third, by Hubert de Bergo, Earl of Kent, who also obtained an annual fair to be held here for three days; but they are now discontinued.

The church at Long Compton is a very ancient structure, of no less antiquity, observes Dugdale, than the Britons' time; it, however, contains nothing that particularly claims the attention of the traveller.

About a mile from Long Compton, in a field adjoining the London road, are the celebrated ROLLRICH STONES, which occupy a circle of about thirty-five yards. These stones, anciently in number sixty, are now reduced to twenty-two. Some of them are seven feet high, but the ruthless hand of time has made them shapeless and unequal. Antiquaries vary in opinion by whom these stones were placed here, or what circumstance to commemorate; some suppose they anciently formed a Druid's temple; and Jago, in his poem of "Edge Hill," describes them as follows:—

"What now the circle drear, and stiffen'd mass
Compose, like us, were animated forms,
With vital warmth, and sense, and thought endued;
A band of warriors tall! in martial dress,

And military pomp array'd! by spells,
And necromantic art transform'd to stone.
So vulgar fame. But clerks, in antique lore
Profoundly skill'd, far other story tell:
And, in its mystic form, temple or court
Espie, to fabled gods, or throned kings
Devote; or fabric monument, rais'd
By *Saxon* hands, or by that *Danish* chief
ROLLA! the builder in the name imply'd."

About two miles from Long Compton is the village of BARTON-ON-THE-HEATH, where resided *Mr. Robert Dover*, attorney, who instituted, in 1600, the annual festivities termed the *Cotswold Games*, which were of great celebrity in the reign of James the first, and the early part of the reign of Charles the first, but terminated at the commencement of the civil war. Ben Johnson, Drayton, and other poets of that age, wrote verses on those athletic diversions; which verses were collected in 1636, and published under the title of "Annalia Dubrensia."

About two miles west of Barton-on-the-Heath is the *Shire Stone*, which marks the boundaries of the counties of Warwick, Worcester, Oxford, and Gloucester. Near this shire stone, according to some historians, was fought a bloody battle, that lasted two days, between Edmund Ironside and Canute the Dane, when both Kings eminently displayed their valour. On the second day of the battle, when the English were in all probability gaining the victory,

the traitor Edric Streon, formerly one of the English commanders, but who deserted their cause and joined the Danes at the battle of Assandum, in Essex, cut off the head of one of the soldiers, who in his features resembled King Edmund, and fixing it on the end of his spear, cried aloud, "Fly, fly, ye scoundrels, behold the head of your King, in whom you trust, seek therefore now to save your own lives." This caused such a consternation among the English soldiers, that it would have occasioned their defeat, had not the King came up and shewed himself. His appearance re-animated their courage, and the battle continued till evening with great fury, and Edmund prepared to renew it next morning, but Canute had made a retreat in the night. The number slain in this battle is mentioned to have been very great, and nearly equal on both sides.

Journey from Long Compton, by Brailes, and through Kineton, and Wellesbourn Hastings, to Warwick.

OUR road from Long Compton to Kineton, twelve miles, is neither very pleasant, good, or easy for strangers to make out, and for us to pretend to direct them from the one place to the other, would be endeavouring to do more than ever we possibly could accomplish; we, therefore, shall only mention, that, after leaving Long Compton about a mile, we pass within a short distance of *Weston Hall*, the residence of Lord Clonmel, see page 281; and, after passing through two small villages, leave, a short distance to the right, five miles from Long Compton, the village of BRAILES, which had formerly a market, obtained for it by a charter from King Henry the third, together with an annual fair for three days; the market has been long discontinued, but a fair is annually held there on Easter Tuesday. From Brailes to Kineton, through Whatcote, seven miles, nothing worthy notice occurs. On entering KINETON, to the right of the road is a mansion, not yet finished, belonging to Charles Dormer, Esq.

Kineton, or *Kington*, is a small market town, situated on the north-east of Edge Hill, about 11

miles from Warwick, 13 from Banbury, and 84 from London.

There are few local names, the etymology of which has occasioned greater difference of opinion among historians than Kineton. Camden supposes its name to be derived from its anciently being a celebrated market for cows or kine; Bishop Gibson, however, affirms Camden's opinion to be erroneous, as Henry the first, in his grant of the church to the canons of Kenilworth, calls it Chinton. Dugdale and several others suppose, from its having been in the possession of Edward the confessor and William the conqueror, that it was called Kingstown, and that its present appellation is only a corruption of that name.

At this place was anciently a *Castle*, which, according to tradition, was the erection of King John, and where he sometimes resided; at the foot of the hill on which the castle stood, is a spring known by the name of *King John's Well.*

In the fourth of Henry the third, a charter was obtained for a weekly market to be held here on the Tuesday, which still continues; and there are fairs held here on June 24, and September 21.

The Church at Kineton, dedicated to St. Peter, was built about the beginning of the reign of Edward the second, and is a stately Gothic structure.

According to the returns made to parliament in 1811, Kineton contains 172 houses, and 801 inhabitants.

Near Kineton is *Edge Hill*, which rises abruptly from ground comparatively level, and extends in a long range of nearly five miles.

On the declivity of this hill was fought the first *pitched battle*, between the forces of King Charles the first and those of the parliament. The battle commenced about noon on Sunday, October 23, 1642, and it was fought with very great resolution on both sides. Prince Rupert, who commanded a large body of the King's horse, furiously charged the left wing of the parliament army, commanded by Colonel Ramsey, which he completely routed, and pursued with very great slaughter as far as Kineton; and the right wing of the parliament army had no better success. The infantry, however, on the side of the King, commanded by Colonel Lindsey, were nearly overpowered by the parliamentarians; but Prince Rupert returning to their assistance, the battle continued with very great fury. Night coming on, no doubt prevented great slaughter, as both armies kept the field, and each claimed the victory; but the King clearly was victorious, as his loss was not so numerous as the parliamentarians (though the greater portion of officers of distinction fell on his side) and he gained much of their ammunition, baggage, &c. He also opened his way to London, which they before endeavoured to prevent, and immediately took Banbury castle, a garrison of the parliamentarians, that had just before refused to yield to him.

The following account of the army of the parliament, and anecdote of Oliver Cromwell, relative to this battle, is extracted from a work entitled "A short View of the Late Troubles in England," said to have been written by Sir William Dugdale:—"The remaining part of the Parliament Army, after the Battel, finding not themselves in a condition to encounter the King again without new Recruits, and therefore made a fair retreat no less than eight miles backward, so did some of them before the fight, standing doubtful of the success, forbear to adventure themselves therein; amongst which the after famous Oliver Cromwell was one (if some of the most eminent persons of his own party, who were in the fight, bely him not,) who, being Captain of a Troop of Horse in the General's Regiment, came not into the Field, but got up into a Steeple within view of the Battel, and there discerning by a Prospective-glass the two wings of their Horse to be utterly routed, made such haste to be gone, that instead of descending the stairs by which he came up, he swing'd down by a Bell-rope, and ran away with his Troop!"

About twenty thousand men, it is recorded, were engaged in Edge Hill battle, about equally divided on each side; and, according to many historians, the number slain was near six thousand, but by a survey taken by the Rev. Mr. Fisher, vicar of Kineton, who was appointed by the Earl of Essex, the leader of the parliament army, for that purpose, the

number amounted to little more than thirteen hundred; among whom, on the side of the King, were the Earl of Lindsey, general; Sir Edmund Verney, standard bearer; and Lord Aubigney, brother to the Duke of Richmond;—on the side of the parliament, Lord St. John of Bletso, Colonel Essex, and Lieutenant-Colonel Ramsay.

A plantation of fir trees mark the place where five hundred of the slain were promiscuously thrown into a pit. Another plantation of firs mark the scite of a cottage in which the two young Princes, afterwards King Charles the second and King James the second, remained during the engagement. Vestiges of the battle are often turned up by the plough, as pieces of armour, spear-heads, buckles, and human bones.

Near the centre of Edge Hill is a spacious Inn, erected principally for the accommodation of persons who visit this place, either to enjoy the prospects, or to view a spot so memorable in British history. The following lines, written at this Inn, are attributed to Mr. Shenstone:—

"Whoe'er has travell'd life's dull round,
Where'er his various tour has been,
May sigh to think how oft he found
His warmest welcome at an inn."

To explain the cause of the above lines, we subjoin the following remark. It appears that Shenstone was on a visit to his friend, Mr. Whistler, who lived in the southern part of Oxfordshire; and that unfor-

tunately disagreeing on some trifling occurrence, the dispute ran so high, that, although Mr. Shenstone suppressed his choler that evening, yet he curtailed his visit, and took a cool leave the next morning; and, traversing the whole country, reached Edge Hill that evening, where, under the influence of the feelings we may naturally suppose he felt on this occasion, he wrote the above lines.

A beautiful natural terrace is formed along the edge of Edge Hill, from which, on a clear day, may be observed Shuckburgh Hills, on the borders of this county; Malvern, Bredon, and Broadway Hills, in Worcestershire; the Wrekin, in Shropshire; Coventry spires; the castle and tower of St. Mary's, Warwick; the different prominent objects as far as Birmingham; and the views are at once magnificent, diversified, and very extensive. From the terrace, Saunderson Miller, Esq. whose son has a seat at RADWAY, in the vale below, caused to be made, at his own expense, several pleasing walks, which are at intervals sheltered by trees and shrubs; from these walks the views are finely varied. The same gentleman erected a tower and artificial ruins of a castle on the hill, from which the prospects are viewed to great advantage. The windows of the tower are filled with painted glass, and the ceiling is ornamented with numerous coats of arms. The contest between the forces of King Charles and those of the parliament took place immediately before these ruins, in the vale below.

In the parish of RATLEY, on the corner of Edge Hill, are the remains of a fortification, of a triangular form, containing about twelve acres. It bears the general appellation of *Nadbury Camp*, and is supposed to have been made by the Romans. Near this fortification, Dugdale informs us, were found a sword of brass and a battle axe.

BURTON DASSET, now a small village but recorded to have been formerly a considerable town, is situated about four miles from Kineton. The term Dasset was conjectured by Dugdale to be derived from *Deorset*, which signified, with the Saxons, "a place where wild beasts had their abode;" and in ancient times, it is supposed, this place was a reception for beasts of chase. In the reign of Henry the third, a market was granted to be held here on Fridays, and an annual fair for three days; but they are now both discontinued. Several of the Temple family are interred in the church at this place.

COMPTON WYNYATE is situated about six miles from Kineton, in a deep valley, whence the former part of its name is derived; and it is supposed to have assumed the latter from a vineyard anciently cultivated here. This place, from the reign of King John, has belonged to the noble family of Compton, who took their name from hence. Sir William Compton, in the reign of Henry the eighth, held several high offices; he was a great favourite of that monarch, who made him groom and afterwards chief

gentleman of his bedchamber. Henry, grandson of Sir William, was summoned to the house of lords by the title of Baron Compton, of Compton; and his eldest son was, on August 2, 1618, created Earl of Northampton.

In the troubles of Charles the first, Spencer Compton, second Earl of Northampton, was a strict adherent to that monarch, and among the truest of his friends. He raised at his own expense a troop of horse and a regiment of foot, and at the battle of Edge Hill brought two thousand of the best disciplined men in the whole army; in this as well as in several other battles he highly distinguished himself for his bravery. At the battle of Hopton Heath, Staffordshire, in 1643, he was encompassed by the enemy, and his horse being killed under him, he was called to surrender on promise of quarter, but this he rejected with disdain, replying that he scorned to take quarter from "such base rogues and rebels as they were;" upon which he was immediately slain by a blow with a halbert on the back part of his head, receiving at the same moment a deep wound in the face. This nobleman left six sons, five of whom were knighted, and *Henry Compton*, his youngest son, was Bishop of London, and is mentioned to have been a very able statesman as well as an eminent divine.—He was born at Compton Wynyate in 1632, and educated at Queen's college, Oxford; after which he travelled a considerable time abroad, and exa-

mined the nature of several governments, from which he received great advantage. At the restoration he returned to England, and accepted a cornetcy in the King's regiment of guards; but soon after resigned that post and studied divinity at Cambridge. Having taken his degrees and entered into orders, he soon obtained several valuable livings, and in 1674 he was made Bishop of Oxford. On the death of Dr. Henchman, in 1675, he was nominated to the bishopric of London, and afterwards entrusted with the education of the Princesses Mary and Anne. He laboured to reconcile the dissenters to the church, and resisted the claims and doctrines of the catholics; his zeal displeased King James the second, who in 1686 suspended him from his episcopal functions; but dreading the invasion of the Prince of Orange, he reinstated him in his former office. On the arrival of the Prince of Orange, Bishop Compton supported his cause in the house of lords, and on April 11, 1689, performed the ceremony of crowning him.—He died in 1713, in the eighty-first year of his age; and by his death, it is recorded that "the church lost a most excellent Bishop, the kingdom a brave and able statesman, the protestant religion, at home and abroad, its ornament and refuge; and the whole christian world an eminent example of virtue and piety."

The mansion in which this amiable prelate was born, belongs to the Earl of Northampton, to whom the estate devolved in 1796. It was erected by Sir

William Compton, principally with materials brought from the ruins of Fulbroke castle, in the reign of Henry the eighth. Sir William also "in 1519, obtained a licence to make a park at his mansion of Compton Vineyatys or Vineyard, in Warwickshire; and for an addition to the same, to enclose two thousand acres more, thereto adjoining." The mansion is large, but irregular; the chimneys are very ornamental, formed in spires, with zigzag mouldings; over the porch of the principal entrance are the royal arms, supported by a greyhound and a griffin; and within the mansion is an ancient chapel. Henry the eighth, after the mansion was completed, spent several days at Compton, and the magnificent bedstead on which he slept during his visit, was here preserved till the old furniture was sold by the late Earl of Northampton. Oliver Cromwell is said to have fired a few shots at this mansion, but was obliged to retire for the want of ammunition; it was, however, in 1646, garrisoned by the parliament army.

The ancient church and monuments at Compton Wynyate, were demolished, in 1646, by the garrison of Compton house; but, after the restoration, the church was rebuilt by James, eldest son of Spencer Compton, second Earl of Northampton, who was afterwards interred in it. Several others of the same family are also here buried.

TYSOE, situated about five miles from Kineton, had formerly a market on Tuesdays, and an annual

fair for four days; but they have been long discontinued.

At this place is a figure of a Horse, cut on the side of a hill. It is composed of a red-coloured soil, whence it takes the name of the *Red Horse,* and measures in height, sixteen feet; from the ears to the shoulder, fourteen feet; and from the breast to the tail, thirty-four feet.

Authors vary in opinion what this figure was intended to commemorate. Jago, in his poem of "Edge Hill," describes it as follows:—

"——————— the pictur'd horse!
Carv'd on the yielding turf—th' armorial sign
On HENGIST'S standard blazon'd erst, as now
On thine, accomplish'd BRUNSWICK! BRITAIN'S pride!
And with the lion match'd, for martial fame,
And far-extended empire, ROME'S fam'd bird
Out-rivalling. They, studious to preserve
The fav'rite form, their vassal tenants bind
Its fading figure to renew,
And to the neighb'ring vale impart its name."

Several modern authors observe, from the supposition of Mr. Wise, that this figure was designed in memory of the valorous Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick, who, to encourage the army of Edward the fourth, at the battle of Touton, slew his horse with his sword, in presence of the King, vowing to share the danger of the engagement on equal terms

with the meanest soldier. The battle of Touton was fought on Palm Sunday, 1461, when King Edward gained a signal victory over the Lancastrians, their army being completely defeated. In this battle, the most bloody that ever took place in England, and on the two following days, in which the contending armies had many skirmishes, 36,776 persons were, according to history, slain, among whom were many of the nobility.

A farm in the parish of Tysoe, called *Red Horse Farm*, is held by the service of keeping the figure of the horse clean and in shape; and the neighbouring people used formerly to assemble, on the recurrence of Palm Sunday, for the purpose of cleansing it from weeds, or any other incumbrance which had encroached on it during the past year, when they were treated with cakes and ale; but this custom has for several years been much neglected.

Continuing our journey from Kineton, we have to remark, that the road is not so good as the generality of turnpike roads in this county; it is composed of a whitish clay, which, on close inspection, proves to be intermixed with fullers' earth. At the distance of about two miles from Kineton is COMPTON VERNEY, formerly called *Compton Murdak*, from the ancient family of Murdak, who were lords of this place from the reign of Henry the first to that of Edward the third, when it was transmitted by Thomas Murdak to the celebrated Alice Perers, mistress

to King Edward, and afterwards wife of Sir William Windsor, from whose son-in-law it passed by purchase to Richard Verney, Esq. ancestor of the present owner, whence it assumed the name of *Compton Verney*. Richard Verney, Esq. in 1691, obtained the title of Lord Willoughby de Brooke, in right of his maternal ancestor, who was sister and heiress to Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke.

Compton House, the seat of this noble family, is placed in a low situation, and was built about the middle of the seventeenth century. It is spacious and handsome; and the rooms in the interior are large and commodious, particularly the hall, which is a very fine apartment. In the pleasure grounds, which are very extensive, admirably shaded with wood, and enriched by a beautiful lake, is a large green house, containing a choice collection of exotics, and a most interesting display of almost all the species of heaths known to botanists.

A short distance from Compton house, the road is intersected by the Roman Fosse-way; and about a mile further, immediately before us, is a delightful view over a large tract of rich cultivated country. About five miles from Kineton is WELLESBOURNE HASTINGS, where formerly a weekly market was held on Monday, and an annual fair for two days; they have, however, been long discontinued. Wellesbourne at present is a considerable village, and the petty sessions for the hundred of

Kineton are held there; the commissioners of taxes for the same hundred also meet at this place to hear appeals.

The church at Wellesbourne is a handsome structure, and was built by Henry de Newburgh, Earl of Warwick. It still continues in a good state of repair, and the tower, being completely covered with ivy, has a pleasing appearance. The parsonage house, which is near the church in a rural situation, is over-hung with ivy, and is a delightful residence.

Bernard Dewes, Esq. one of the most intelligent and active magistrates of the county of Warwick, resides at Wellesbourne, in a handsome mansion.

At WALTON, in the parish of Wellesbourne, is a fine handsome mansion, called *Walton Hall*, the seat of Sir Charles Mordaunt, Bart. one of the representatives in parliament for this county.

At this place, according to Gough, in his "Additions to Camden's Britannia," were found buried, in 1774, three skulls, lying in a row, with "two Saxon jewels, set in gold, which were probably once hung round the necks of two of the parties to whom these skulls belonged. One of them was set with an opal and two rubies; the other was adorned on both sides with a cross, between two rude human figures, with a sword or lance at the outer hand of each, and an inscription, which, as Mr. Pegge explains, is Mary and Oswald, and refers to St. Oswald, the patron of Worcester, as if struck by Wulstan, Bishop of that see, about 1088."

At NEWBOLD PACEY, about a mile from Wellesbourne, is the seat of William Little, Esq.

Continuing our journey from Wellesbourne, and at the distance of about three miles from thence, is BARFORD, a pleasant village, containing many large handsome houses, situated on the southern bank of the river Avon, over which is a good stone bridge.

The church at Barford is a handsome edifice, well fitted up; and in the chancel there are several monumental tablets.

At the north-eastern extremity of the village, is the delightful seat of Charles Mills, Esq. one of the representatives in parliament for the borough of Warwick. This mansion is spacious and elegant, surrounded by fine plantations, laid out with great taste. It is seated on an eminence, commanding beautiful prospects over some of the richest meadow ground in the kingdom, through which the Avon winds, adding great beauty to the scene.

On leaving Barford we cross the Avon by the bridge above-mentioned, and, at the distance of about two miles, pass, on the left of the road, *Longbridge House*, the seat of William Staunton, Esq.; and one mile further arrive at Warwick, which we have before described.

Journey from Warwick, through Kenilworth and Coleshill, to Tamworth.

Leaving Warwick, and at the distance of about a mile we pass, to the right of the road, *Guy's Cliff House*, the seat of Bertie Greatheed, Esq. About half a mile further, to the left of the road, is *Blacklow Hill*, remarkable as being the place where Piers Gaveston, Earl of Cornwall, was beheaded, (see page 63.) At the distance of three miles from Warwick is the village of LEEK WOOTTON, where is a handsome church, built by the late Honourable Mrs. Leigh, placed on a bold eminence; and near it is the parsonage-house, a charming residence.

At WOODCOTE, in the parish of Leek Wootton, is an ancient manor house, which was in being in Dugdale's time; it is most agreeably situated, and within these few years has received considerable repairs and improvements, so that at present it has the appearance of a handsome modern mansion.—It is now the property of Robert Mallory, Esq. of Bath.

Pursuing our journey, and at the distance of two miles from Wootton, we arrive at KENILWORTH, situated in a very pleasant part of the county, 5 miles from Warwick, 5 from Leamington, and 5 from Coventry.

Kenilworth is a market town, but has more the appearance of a large cheerful village, as the houses mostly stand detached from each other, and many of them are spacious and handsome. It principally consists of one irregular street extending more than a mile along the turnpike road; there are, however, several collateral branches, one of which forms a considerable street, and the whole has the appearance of neatness and comfort.

Previous to the Norman conquest, Kenilworth was a member of Stoneleigh, and was with that place held in demesne by Edward the confessor, and afterwards by William the conqueror. Dugdale mentions, that a *Castle* was situated in this demesne, on the bank of the river Avon, opposite Stoneleigh abbey; but it was demolished in the war between Edmund Ironside and Canute the Dane.

Kenilworth is famous for its noble *Castle,* built in the reign of Henry the first, by Geoffrey de Clinton, who from a low station was raised, by his own merits, to the high office of Lord Chief Justice of England. On the death of Geoffrey de Clinton, the castle descended to his son, from whom, it appears, it was transmitted to the crown; and when the eldest son of Henry the second rebelled against him, a garrison was placed in it by that monarch. Considerable additions, alterations, and repairs were made to the castle in the reign of King John, who, towards the latter part of his reign, garrisoned it, and placed therein for safety, the Prince, his son.

In the early part of the reign of Henry the third, the castle was used as a prison, and had twice justices appointed to attend the gaol delivery. It was afterwards repaired and strengthened by Henry the third; and, in the thirty-eighth year of his reign, he granted it to Simon Montfort, Earl of Leicester, and Eleanor his wife, during their lives; but this ambitious nobleman taking up arms against his monarch, at the head of the insurgent barons, this castle was made one of the strong holds of their party. After a victory over the King, at Lewes, Montfort and the Barons were totally routed at Evesham, by the heroic Edward, son of Henry the third, in which battle Montfort was slain. His son, however, remained in this castle, where he was joined by those of his friends who had the good fortune to escape from the battle of Evesham. Young Montfort, fearful of falling into the King's hands, withdrew secretly to France, leaving Henry de Hastings governor of the castle; who for six months defended it with great bravery against the King, who besieged it. During this siege, the garrison behaved with the most resolute valour, making frequent sallies, and having engines which cast forth stones of great size; nor would they have yielded at last, had not that irresistible enemy, famine, attacked them within the walls, and forced them to preserve their lives by a surrender, December 21, 1266. The decree called the *Dictum de Kenilworth,* was issued during this siege, the intent of which was to mitigate the penalties

enacted by the parliament at Winchester, against the partizans of the barons; by this decree, instead of the forfeiture of their estates, as before enacted, those who had taken up arms against the King, might redeem their lands on paying a fine, not under two nor exceeding five years rent. Henry de Hastings, with the rest of the garrison, were permitted to go freely forth, with their horses, arms, and accoutrements; they had also four days allowed them for the removal of their goods. After the surrender of this fortress, the King publicly returned thanks, and bestowed the castle on Edmund, his youngest son, afterwards created Earl of Leicester and Lancaster.

Roger Mortimer, Earl of March, in the seventh of Edward the first, 1286, held a tournament here, at which a hundred knights, and as many ladies, attended, who styled themselves "The Society of the Round Table," from one at which they were seated, to avoid disputes about precedency. This tournament is recorded to have been held with such splendour, that the ladies wore *silken mantles!*

In the fifteenth of Edward the second, the Earl of Lancaster, possessor of this castle, son of Edmund, Earl of Leicester and Lancaster, raised a rebellion, in which, being unsuccessful, he was taken, and beheaded at Pontefract, and his estates confiscated to the crown. At this castle, the weak, but unfortunate, Edward the second, having been deposed by his Queen, was imprisoned; and here he was obliged to

sign his abdication, and resign his crown to his son Edward. From hence he was removed to Berkeley castle, Gloucestershire, where he was, on September 22, 1327, most barbarously murdered. In the reign of Edward the third, this castle was restored to Henry, brother and heir to the Earl of Lancaster, who was beheaded in the preceding reign; and it afterwards became the property of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, in consequence of his marriage with the heiress of that family. This nobleman made very considerable additions to the castle, and these are still called *Lancaster's Buildings.* On his death it descended to his son, afterwards King Henry the fourth; and, during the contentions of the houses of York and Lancaster, it was alternately taken by the roses. Queen Elizabeth, in the fifth year of her reign, granted it to her favourite Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester; and this nobleman extended the chase, and made large additions to the castle, beautifying it in the most elegant manner. When the whole was completed, at an expense, in those days, of sixty thousand pounds, he invited the Queen to a sumptuous entertainment, which is thus described by Dugdale:—

"Here, in July, 1575, (seventeenth of Elizabeth) having completed all things for her reception, did he entertain the Queen for the space of XVII dayes, with excessive cost, and a variety of delightful shewes, as may be seen at large in a special discourse thereof

then printed, and entitled, *The Princely Pleasures of Kenilworth Castle;*—having at her first entrance a floating island on the pool, bright blazing with torches, upon which were clad in silks the lady of the lake, and two nymphs waiting upon her, who made a speech to the Queen, in metre, of the antiquity and owners of the castle, which was closed with cornets, and other loud music. Within the Base-court there was a very goodly bridge set up, XX foot wide, and LXX foot long, over which the Queen did pass; on each side whereof were posts erected, with presents upon them, unto her, by the gods, viz. a cage of wild fowl, by Sylvanus; sundry sorts of rare fruit, by Pomona; of corn, by Ceres; of wine, by Bacchus; of sea fish, by Neptune; of all habiliments of war, by Mars; of musical instruments, by Phœbus. And for the several dayes of her stay, various rare shews and sports were there exercised, viz. in the chase, a savage man with satyrs; bear baitings, fire works, Italian tumblers, a country brideall, with running at the quintin, and morrice dancing. And as there might be nothing wanting that these parts could afford, hither came the Coventrie men, and acted the ancient play long since used in that city, called Hock-Tuesday, setting forth the destruction of the Danes, in King Ethelred's time; with which the Queen was so pleased that she gave them a brace of bucks, and five marks in money to bear the charges of a feast.

"Besides all this, he had upon the pool, a triton

riding on a mermaid, XVIII foot long; as also Arion, on a dolphin, with rare music. And to honour this entertainment the more, there were then knighted here, Sir Thomas Cecil, son and heir of the Lord Treasurer; Sir Henry Cobham, brother to Lord Cobham; Sir Francis Stanhope; and Sir Thomas Tresham. The cost and expense whereof may be guessed at, by the quantity of beer then drank, which amounted to CCCXX hogsheads of the ordinary sort, as I have credibly herd."

After this royal entertainment, which is recorded to have cost a thousand pounds daily, the Earl of Leicester made the castle his occasional residence till his death, in 1588, when it passed, according to his will, to his brother Ambrose, Earl of Warwick, for life; and it was then to return to his own son, Sir Robert Dudley; but his legitimacy being doubted, he attempted to prove it before the House of Lords, when on a sudden the proceeding was stopped, and a special order made by the Lords, that the depositions should be sealed up, and no copies taken of them, without the King's special license. Sir Robert, astonished at this, resolved to leave the kingdom, and obtained license to travel for three years; his enemies, taking advantage of his absence, procured a summons for his return by a special privy seal, which he not obeying, this castle was unjustly seized by a decree of that infamous court, the Star Chamber, and was then given to Prince Henry, son of James the first.

On this occasion, a survey was taken of the castle, land, and woods, and they were valued at £38,554 15 0. Prince Henry, though very much delighted with Kenilworth, would not avail himself of the unjust decree of the Star Chamber, but proposed to purchase Sir Robert Dudley's right in it, (Lady Dudley having a jointure on the estate) for the sum of £14,500. Sir Robert, hopeless of having it restored to him again, accepted the overtures, and the transfer was made; but of the purchase-money, no part ever came into his hands, for £3,000, the only money ever paid, was lost in the hands of a merchant, who became a bankrupt; and Prince Henry dying soon after, it was claimed by his brother Charles, and no notice taken of Prince Henry's debts, so that Sir Robert lost the whole of the sum. When Charles ascended the throne, he granted the castle to Carey, Earl of Monmouth, but the civil wars commencing, desolation spread her wings over it, for the puritanical soldiers of Cromwell gave the finishing blow to its greatness; as they dismantled the towers, beat down the walls, felled the majestic woods, drained the lake, rooted up the gardens, destroyed the beautiful park which in every direction for several miles surrounded this stately residence,—and to sum up the whole, they left the castle in its present dismantled state.

At the restoration, Charles the second granted the lease of this ruin (for it was little better) to the Earl

of Monmouth's daughter; on the expiration of which he granted it, with the manor, to Lawrence Viscount Hyde, created Baron of Kenilworth and Earl of Rochester, from whose descendants it passed by marriage to the Earl of Clarendon; and we are happy to state, that the present Lord Clarendon has taken measures to secure the remains of the buildings from further depredations.

This noble castle, which measured seven acres within the walls, once the boast of pride, the seat of elegance, and the strength of defence, is now a mere heap of ruins; there still remain many fragments of dismantled towers, mouldering rooms, gates, and walls, broken battlements, shattered stair-cases, arches, and windows, some of which are beautifully ornamented with tracery &c.; but the whole are so unconnected, that it is impossible to form an adequate idea of its original grandeur. On comparing its present with its ancient state, and as we tread the ground so much famed in history as Kenilworth, the mind is naturally affected with a pleasing pensive melancholy. "Within the walls of this castle how many a heart has throbbed with joy! and oh, how many a heavy laden sigh has thence been wafted to those courts above where every wrong is registered, and where every tear is bottled against the day of retribution!"

The principal gateway, built by the Earl of Leicester, is converted into a dwelling-house, and is occupied by Mr. William Boddington, a very

respectable farmer. It is the only part of these ruins that are inhabited, and is the most entire.—In one of the ground floor apartments is a very curious chimney-piece, the upper part is of carved wood, and the lower alabaster, bearing the date 1571, with the letters R. L. the initials of that princely favourite of Queen Elizabeth, the Earl of Leicester. Cæsar's tower is the most ancient as well as strongest part of the castle, its walls being in some places sixteen feet in thickness, and it is supposed to be the only part of the original fortress remaining that was erected by Geoffrey de Clinton. The grand Gothic hall is eighty-six feet long and forty-four feet wide, formerly a most magnificent apartment, lighted by noble windows of elegant workmanship, now overgrown with ivy;—to the grand entertainments formerly served up here, and the noise of revelry which resounded through the vaulted passages, a solemn silence has succeeded, interrupted only at intervals by the hoarse croaking of the raven, the noise of the jackdaws, or others of the feathered tribe. This hall forms part of the erection raised by the Duke of Lancaster, termed *Lancaster's Buildings*, considerable remains of which are scattered about, in many places covered with ivy, and the howling wind waving the grass on the forsaken battlements has a mournful and solemn effect on the imagination. *Leicester's Buildings*, so called from the nobleman by whom they were erected, though erected the latest, yet from having been built of a

mouldering stone, appear the oldest, and threaten to sink early into total destruction—in fact, the whole of this interesting ruin decays daily from the effects of time, and the shock of the elements. In 1817 a great part of the front of the west side of Cæsar's tower gave way; and about three months after, in September the same year, the north-west angle fell with a tremendous crash. Some ladies who had been sketching these beautiful remains, had a most providential escape; they were seated for a considerable time under that part of the tower, and had left the place but a few minutes when thirty tons weight of the ruin came upon the very spot they had quitted!

Geoffrey de Clinton, who built the castle, founded a *Monastery* at Kenilworth for canons regular of the order of St. Augustine, which was so exceedingly well endowed as to become one of the richest in the kingdom. Previous to the dissolution it was denominated an abbey, and when it was dissolved, its annual revenue was valued at £533 15 4, above all reprises. The abbot and sixteen monks had pensions granted them. The only visible remains at present of this abbey consist of a Gothic gateway, now much mutilated, and some fragments of the walls.

The Church at Kenilworth is a venerable Gothic structure, situated near the remains of the abbey.—It has a handsome spire at the west end, and the entrance to the interior, which is commodious and well pewed, is through a fine Saxon arch.

The market at this place is on Wednesday, but it is inconsiderable; fairs are annually held here on April 30 and September 30.

An extensive manufacture of horn combs is carried on at Kenilworth; and sal ammoniac, glauber salts, and Prussian blue are also made here. According to the returns made to parliament in 1811, Kenilworth contains 471 houses, and 2,279 inhabitants.

STONELEIGH, a pleasant village, is situated on the banks of the river Sow, about three miles from Kenilworth, and four from Leamington.

Before the conquest, this place was held in demesne by Edward the confessor, and afterwards by William the conqueror; at which time the woods (including Kenilworth, that place being then a member of Stoneleigh,) extended four miles in length, and two in breadth, in which the King had feeding for two thousand hogs!

At Stoneleigh was formerly a monastery for Cistercian monks, who, in 1154, removed here from Radford in Staffordshire. At the time the monks came here there were in the manor sixty-eight villains, four borders (or freeholders), and two priests; all which held thirty carucates of land. Also four bondmen, whereof each held one messuage, and one quartrone of land, by the service of making the gallows and hanging the thieves: each of which bondmen was to wear a red clout betwixt his shoulders, upon his upper garment; to plough, reap, make the

lord's malt, and to do other servile work. Sir Edw. Coke says the worst tenure he has heard of, is to hold lands to be a hangman, or executioner.

In the twelfth of Edward the first, the monks obtained a grant for a weekly market and an annual fair to be held at Stoneleigh; and numerous benefactions and privileges were at various times bestowed upon the abbey. At the dissolution, the revenue of this monastery was £151 3 1 per annum, above all reprises; and its possessions were granted to Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, whose heirs in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, sold it to Sir Thomas Leigh, Lord Mayor of London, who erected a mansion on the scite of the abbey. Charles the first, after his unsuccessful attempt upon Coventry, retired for the night to this place, where he was favourably received by the grandson of the above-mentioned gentleman; and for his loyalty and steadfast adherence to his monarch, Charles created him a baron, by the title of Lord Leigh, of Stoneleigh. On the decease, without issue, of Edward Lord Leigh, the fifth in descent from the first baron, the estate descended to his only sister, the Honourable Mrs. Leigh, who died in 1806, when it passed to the Rev. Thomas Leigh, of Addlestrop, Gloucestershire. On the decease of this gentleman it descended to his nephew, James Henry Leigh, Esq. M. P. for Winchester, the present possessor.

Chandos Leigh, Esq. heir apparent of J. H. Leigh, Esq. possessor of this estate, is a poet of very shining talent; his productions, however, as yet are but little known, as they have been mostly privately printed.

The noble and spacious mansion, called *Stoneleigh Abbey*, the residence of the Leigh family, is most delightfully situated, in the midst of a luxuriant and fertile country, adorned by extensive and venerable woods, and watered by the Avon, which being here of ample breadth, flows through the grounds with a noble effect. Over one part of this river is a fine bridge of one elliptical arch, erected from a plan of Mr. Rennie, and intended as the principal approach to the abbey.

Of the original habitation of the Cistercian monks, there are but few remains; among these is an ancient gateway, erected by Robert de Hockell, the sixteenth abbot, who placed on the front the large escutcheon of stone, in memory of King Henry the second, as the founder of the abbey.

The oldest part of the present mansion was built by Sir Thomas Leigh, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. The more modern part is very extensive and lofty, of a square form, with a fine front in the Corinthian order, erected about a century ago, by Thomas, the fourth Lord Leigh, and contains many handsome and splendid apartments. The gardens belonging to this mansion are extensive and elegant; and the park is very large, ornamented by a profusion of stately trees,

particularly oaks, and is abundantly stocked with deer. The whole of the immense domain attached to Stoneleigh abbey, is said to comprise more than twenty-five thousand acres!

The church at Stoneleigh is a large ancient edifice, of Saxon or early Norman architecture; and the tower, which is overgrown with ivy, presents a fine object to the lover of the picturesque. We are sorry to observe the interior of the church is in a dilapidated condition, the pews being in a very decayed state; we, however, understand, that it is in contemplation to put it into a state of repair. In the chancel are three monuments of the Leigh family; two of these are plain marble tablets, to the memory of the last Lord Leigh, who died in 1786; and the Honourable Mrs. Leigh, his sister, distinguished for her benevolence and goodness of heart, who died in 1806.—The third is a fine marble monument, to the memory of Alicia, Duchess Dudley, and her daughter Alicia, erected by herself. They are represented on altar tombs, in recumbent postures, the mother elevated above and the daughter below, and over them is a large canopy supported by Ionic pillars.

In the village of Stoneleigh is a range of alms houses, built of stone, for five men and five women, to be unmarried persons, founded by Lady Alicia Leigh, wife of Sir Thomas Leigh, who purchased the estate in the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

Pursuing our journey from Kenilworth, and at the distance of about six miles, to the right of the road, is

the village of BERKESWELL, which formed anciently part of the immense possessions of Henry de Newburgh, Earl of Warwick, who gave it to Ralph de Mandeville, whose son Nigel had a park here, and most probably also a mansion. At present there is a newly erected handsome mansion in this parish, called *Berkeswell Hall,* the seat of John E. E. Wilmot, Esq.

The parish of Berkeswell includes the village of BARSTON, a place, says Dugdale, before the conquest of very considerable note, and in Doomsday Book it is stated to contain ten hides.

Continuing our journey, and about nine miles from Kenilworth, is Stone Bridge, where we cross the turnpike-road leading from Coventry to Birmingham.

GREAT PACKINGTON is situated a short distance from Stone Bridge, on some of the most elevated ground in the kingdom, from whence numerous fine and extensive prospects may be obtained.—This place anciently belonged to the priory at Kenilworth, and coming to the crown at the dissolution, was sold to John Fisher, Esq. who erected a mansion here. Sir Clement Fisher, Bart. a descendant of the above gentleman, erected another mansion at this place, called *Packington Hall,* now the residence of the Earl of Aylesford, to whom it descended by the marriage of his ancestor, the Hon. Heneage Finch, with the daughter of the above-mentioned Sir Clement Fisher. It is an extensive and handsome edifice, though in a low situation, and has received

very considerable alterations and additions from the late and present Earl. The old mansion built by John Fisher, Esq. is now inhabited by the game-keeper of the present noble owner. The park, which is connected with the pleasure grounds by a large arch turned over the turnpike-road, is finely wooded, and embellished with pleasing lakes of water. In the park there is a neat stone monument under an elm tree, erected by the Earl of Aylesford, in memory of William Cawsey, a farrier, who was there struck dead by lightning in 1789. It is also intended as a warning to others, of the imprudence and danger of taking shelter under trees in a thunder storm.

Packington church, situated within the limits of the park, was re-built in the latter part of the eighteenth century, and is a neat edifice. The interior is very handsome, and is adorned by monuments to the memory of John Fisher, Esq. and Sir Clement Fisher and his wife.

Near Packington is a small fanciful building, called *Forest Hall,* built for the accommodation of a society of archers, termed *The Woodmen of Arden,* who hold annual meetings to exercise the bow for honorary prizes.

Continuing our journey, and about four miles from Stone Bridge and thirteen from Kenilworth is COLESHILL, a small, but pleasant market town, situated on a commanding eminence, at the foot of which runs the river Cole, and from these circumstances it takes its name. It is distant 18 miles from

Warwick, 12 from Coventry, 10 from Birmingham, and 101 from London.

This town is of great antiquity, and is one of those called ancient demesne, it having been possessed by Edward the confessor and William the conqueror. From the latter monarch, or his successor, it passed to Geoffrey de Clinton, in whose family it continued till 1353, when it came by marriage to Sir John de Mountfort. The Mountforts continued in possession of it till the reign of Henry the seventh, when Sir Simon Mountfort, the then possessor, was cruelly attainted and executed on the charge of sending thirty pounds to Perkin Warbeck, though he really believed that impostor was the son of his former master, Edward the fourth. The large possessions of this unfortunate man being confiscated, the manor of Coleshill was granted to Simon Digby, deputy-constable of the Tower, who had conducted him to the bar at his trial. Digby built a mansion in the neighbourhood, which became the chief seat of the family, who rose to great eminence. Robert Lord Digby, in the twentieth of James the first, obtained new charters for a weekly market on the Wednesday, and for two annual fairs to be held at Coleshill.—The present Earl Digby takes the title of Viscount Coleshill from this place.

A Castle anciently existed at this place, though no remains of it are at present visible. Dugdale says, "old foundations have been accidentally found in a field in this parish, among which was a Roman

copper coin, on one side of which was the head of Trojan, and the other Piety."

The Church at Coleshill is dedicated to St. Peter, and is a fine old structure, in the florid Gothic style of architecture. It is situated on the summit of the eminence on which the town stands, and having at its west end a handsome square tower, from which proceeds a fine octagonal spire of considerable altitude, it forms a conspicuous object in the landscape of the surrounding country. The spire was formerly much higher; but in the reign of Edward the sixth, being considerably damaged by lightning, it was obliged to be repaired, and lost fifteen or twenty feet of its original height. The interior of the church is enriched with many fine monuments of the Digby family; among these is the tomb of Simon Digby, the first possessor of the manor of Coleshill of his name, and Alice his wife. Also a monument to Kildare, Lord Digby, Baron of Geashill, in Ireland, and Mary his wife; and as the inscription, which records a very praise-worthy character, was written by the pious and excellent Dr. Hough, Bishop of Worcester, we are convinced, as he observes on the monument himself, "he has said nothing which either veracity or modesty should oblige him to suppress."

There are two monuments under two arches in the wall, representing ancient knights, cross-legged, and armed in mail with short surtouts; they are supposed to represent two of the Clinton family.

Alice, the wife of Simon Digby before-mentioned, left by will a piece of land, the profits arising from which were to be disposed of in the following manner, viz. That every child under nine years of age that should (every day after the performance of high mass) kneel down at the end of the altar and say five paternosters, five aves, and a creed, for her soul, the soul of Simon Digby her husband, her heir, and all christian souls, should have a silver penny. At the reformation, this custom was abolished, being thought superstitious, and the lands devolved to the crown; but the parishioners afterwards bought them, and with part of the yearly profits arising from them, endowed a school, for the education of poor children. The other moiety of the money is distributed to such children, who repairing to the church every morning at ten o'clock, say the Lord's prayer before the clerk, who has an allowance for his attendance and for tolling the bell to summon the children.

On the north side of the church-yard is a *Free Grammar School*, of ancient foundation, with a salary and various privileges, worth more than a hundred pounds annually; but this is, and has been for many years, a sinecure.

Coleshill has a weekly *Market* on Wednesday; and annual *Fairs* on the first Monday in January, Shrove Monday, May 6, second Monday in July, and Monday following September 26. A considerable quantity of hats are manufactured here.—According to the returns made to parliament in 1811,

Coleshill is stated to have 345 houses, and 1,639 inhabitants.

In the neighbourhood of Coleshill was formerly situated the ancient mansion of the Digby family, created Earls of Bristol by James the first; but the park now alone remains. The title of Earl of Bristol became extinct in the Digby family on the death of the third Earl, in 1698.

SHUSTOKE, a place remarkable as being the birth-place of *Sir William Dugdale*, the great historian of this county, is situated about two and a half miles from Coleshill. *Blythe Hall*, the residence of Dugdale and where he died, is situated in this parish. It is in possession of Mrs. Dugdale,* mother of D. S. Dugdale, Esq. M. P. of Merevale, and it contains a few good portraits. Sir William Dugdale was born at the rectory house of Shustoke, on September 12, 1605, and he was educated at Nether Whitacre and Coventry Grammar School, from whence he went to Merton College, Oxford. He married at the age of eighteen, and about a year after went to live at Fillongley where he had an estate.—In 1625 he purchased the manor of Blythe, in the parish of Shustoke, and the next year, selling his estate at Fillongley, removed to Blythe hall. He devoted himself to the study of antiquities, and was introduced into the Herald's office by Sir Christopher Hatton. In this retreat he improved his collections, and in the summer of 1641, he made draughts of

* This lady is since dead.

all the monuments, copying the epitaphs, and also arms in the windows, or cut in stone, in the catheral of St. Paul's, London; and the abbey church at Westminster; and after this he went to Peterborough, Ely, Norwich, Lincoln, Newark, Beverley, Southwell, Hull, York, Selby, Chester, Lichfield, Tamworth, and Warwick; and did the same in all those cathedrals, collegiate, conventual, and many other parochial churches. During the civil war, the appointments he held occasioned him to be present in many scenes of action. By him the castle of Banbury, and the towns of Coventry and Warwick were summoned to surrender, and the garrison of the two latter places he proclaimed traitors to the crown.—He was present with King Charles at the battle of Edge Hill, and was afterwards at the siege of Oxford. On the ruin of the royal cause, he compounded for his estate, and employed himself in completing a collection from the Records in the Tower, and other places. In 1655, he published the first volume of his Monasticon Anglicanum, and the second and third volumes appeared in 1661 and 1673.—This is a curious collection of all the foundation charters of the dissolved monasteries, with descriptions, and adorned with plates. In 1656 he published his celebrated Antiquities of Warwickshire, after a labour of twenty years. In 1658 he published his History of St. Paul's Cathedral, which is peculiarly valuable, as it is an account of that edifice previous to its

destruction by the great fire of London in 1666.—At the restoration he was made Norroy King of Arms. In 1664 he published the second volume of Spelman's Councils; and in 1675 and 1676 he published his work called the Baronage of England, in three volumes folio. In 1677 a patent passed the great seal creating him Garter principal King of Arms, and the same year he was knighted. This famed antiquary died in his chair, at Blythe hall, February 10, 1686, in the 81st year of his age.

Besides his principal works before-mentioned, he also wrote a History of Draining and Embanking Fens and Marshes; Spelman's Glossarium Archaiologicum; Origines Juridiciales; a Short View of the Late Troubles in England; the Ancient Usage in Bearing of Arms, &c. &c. "Sir William Dugdale merits the highest commendation, having possessed talents well adapted to the pursuits of an antiquary, and exerted indefatigable industry directed to valuable objects, by consummate judgment."

Shustoke church is a large, ancient, handsome edifice, erected in the reign of Edward the second. The remains of Sir William Dugdale, and his wife, lie in a vault on the north side of the chancel; over the tomb is a mural tablet, with a long latin inscription, and adorned with the family arms. There is also (among other monuments of the Dugdale family,) a monument to the memory of Sir John Dugdale, Norroy King of Arms, the only son who arrived at maturity, of Sir William the antiquary.

At NETHER WHITACRE, about four miles from Coleshill, was born *Francis Holyoke,* who in 1604 became rector of Southam, in this county.—He was a very learned scholar, and in 1606, he published an Etymological Dictionary of Latin Words, quarto, which he a fourth time edited in 1633.—During the civil war he suffered exceedingly in consequence of his attachment to the royal cause, and died in 1653.

Maxtoke Castle is situated about three miles from Coleshill. This castle was erected by William de Clinton, Earl of Huntingdon, in the reign of Edward the third, and continued the principal seat of that powerful family till the sixteenth of King Henry the fourth, when Sir William de Clinton exchanged it with Humphry, Earl of Stafford, afterwards Duke of Buckingham, with whom it was a favourite residence. In 1483, the first of Richard the third, Henry, Duke of Buckingham, grandson of the before-mentioned Earl, was attainted and executed, upon which the castle was committed to the custody of an officer appointed by the crown. Richard the third visited this castle when he was going to oppose the Earl of Richmond, his competitor for the crown, and ordered all the inner buildings of Kenilworth castle to be removed here. Losing his life, however, on Bosworth Field, this order was not complied with; and Henry the seventh granted this castle to Sir William Compton and his heirs, which family, in the thirty-ninth of

Queen Elizabeth, disposed of it to Lord Keeper Eggerton, who, a short time after, sold it to Thomas Dilke, Esq. whose descendants continue in possession of it.

This castle is a fine ancient building, and still continues in a good state of preservation. It is encompassed by a moat, and is built in the form of a parallelogram; at each corner is a hexagonal tower, and the entrance is by a fine gateway, with a hexagonal tower on each side. The gates are in their original state, covered with plates of iron; they were made by order of Humphry, Duke of Buckingham, who caused his own arms to be embossed in the iron work, which still remains. Much of the habitable part of this castle is still standing, but a portion of the interior was burnt by accident. Among the remaining ancient apartments is the noble hall; a spacious dining room, with a very curious carved door and chimney; the kitchen; and the chapel. The walls of the great court are pierced with many cells, the ancient caserns or lodgments for the soldiers belonging to the garrison. The gardens belonging to this castle are spacious, and laid out with taste and elegance.

About half a mile from the castle are the ruins of *Maxtoke Priory*, which was founded in 1337, the the tenth of Edward the third, by Sir William de Clinton, for canons regular of the order of St. Augustine. At the dissolution the revenue of this priory was £130 11 8 per annum, and the scite

was granted by Henry the eighth to the Duke of Suffolk. From the remains of this religious edifice which are still visible, it appears to have been a large and handsome pile; the ruins are over-grown with ivy, and present an extremely picturesque appearance.

Continuing our journey from Coleshill, and at the distance of about three miles, to the left of the road, is the village of CURDWORTH, anciently called ARDEN; and at *Park Hall*, in this parish, resided the ancient family of Arden, who assumed their surname from this place. Here, in 1532, was born Edward Arden, whose father dying when he was only two years old, he became the ward of Sir George Throckmorton, of Coughton, whose daughter he afterwards married, and lived in a retired manner upon his own estate in this parish. Residing near the Earl of Leicester, he had frequent quarrels with that nobleman, whose pride and haughtiness wished every person to bend to him; Mr. Arden also refused to wear Leicester's livery,—"a base kind of homage which was paid him without scruple by other neighbouring gentlemen,"—therefore that haughty favourite of Queen Elizabeth determined to ruin him.

Mr. Somerville, a wild young man, who had married one of Mr. Arden's daughters, was drawn by Hall, his father-in-law's priest (a tool and confident of Leicester's) into a kind of plot against the life of Queen Elizabeth, and being very hot and impetuous,

he set off for London, where drawing his sword he began to cut and wound all he met. Being apprehended, he confessed his design, and dropping something respecting his father-in-law, orders were sent into Warwickshire for the arrest of Mr. Arden, his wife, and Hall the priest, who were sent to the tower. Here they were tortured, and afterwards tried at Guildhall; and although no evidence was adduced against them, except the report of a letter sent by Hall to Mr. Somerville, and which being shewn to Mr. Arden by his daughter he had burnt, yet they were all condemned for high treason, chiefly on Hall's confession. Somerville was discovered strangled the night previous to the day fixed for his execution, as was supposed that he might not recriminate his prosecutors at the place of execution; and Arden was executed December 20, 1583, declaring his innocence to multitudes of pitying spectators. The heads of Arden and Somerville were placed on London bridge, but the rest were pardoned. Queen Elizabeth granted Arden's estate to Mr. Darcy; however his son, Robert Arden, afterwards recovered the greatest part of it.

The scite of Park hall, where this family resided, is still discernable, from the remains of the moat which surrounded it. Mr. Hutton observes in his History of Birmingham, speaking of Park hall, "This is another of those desolate islands, from which every creature is fled, and every sound, except

that of the winds; nay, even the very clouds seem to lament the desolation with tears."

Hams Hall, about a mile from Curdworth, is the seat of the Rev. Bowyer Adderley.

Continuing our journey, and at the distance of about four miles from Coleshill, to the left of the road, is a handsome mansion, the residence of Mrs. Hacket, relict of Andrew Hacket, Esq. called *Moxhall Hall,* surrounded by a beautiful small park. About two miles further, to the right of the road, is a handsome and spacious mansion, called *Middleton Hall,* a seat of the Right Honourable Lord Middleton, surrounded by a fine park, lawns, and gardens.

About two miles from Middleton hall is the village of KINGSBURY, mentioned by Dugdale to have been in the time of the Saxons, a seat belonging to the Mercian Kings; he also supposes that this is the same place where Burtulphus, King of Mercia, resided, and where he had a grand council of his prelates and nobles, in 851.

Continuing our journey from Middleton, and at the distance of about six miles we arrive at Tamworth, which is before described; see page 183.

Journey from Tamworth, through Birmingham, and Knowle, to Warwick.

As we have before described the different places and objects worthy notice from Tamworth to Birmingham in our fifth journey, we refer our readers to that (see page 190); and shall commence the present on leaving Birmingham.

SOLIHULL, commonly called *Silhill,* about seven miles from Birmingham, is the first place on this journey that claims our attention. It anciently, according to Dugdale, was called *Ulverlei,* and was held in the reign of Edward the confessor, by Edwin, Earl of Mercia. Mr. Hutton, in his account of seats, &c. in the vicinity of Birmingham, says, "This manor was the property of the Earls of Mercia, but whether their residence was here is uncertain. The traces of a moat yet remain, which are triangular, and encircle a wretched farm house of no note."

This manor was granted by William the conqueror, to a lady of the name of Cistina, of whom Mr. Hutton remarks "probably a handsome lass, of the same complexion as his mother; thus we err when we say William gave all the land in the Kingdom to his followers—some little was given to those *he* followed."

This lady having tired the arms of royalty was married to Ralph de Limesie, who became lord of

this place, and erected a castle at a spot now called OLTON, a small village, about two miles from Solihull. The scite of this castle is now called *Hogg's Moat*, and is thus mentioned by Mr. Hutton:—"The moat is upon a much larger plan than Ulverley, takes in a compass of five acres, had two trenches; the outer is nearly obliterated, but the inner is marked with the strongest lines we meet with. This trench is about twenty feet deep, and about thirty yards from the crown of one bank to the other. When Dugdale saw it about a hundred and sixty years ago, the centre, which is about two acres, where the castle stood, was covered with old oaks; round the centre are now some thousands, the oldest of which is not more than a century; so that the timber is changed since the days of Dugdale, but not the appearance of the land. The centre is bare of timber, and exhibits the marks of the plough."

In the reign of King John this place passed by marriage to Hugh de Odingsells; and his son William, in the reign of Henry the third, procured a charter for a weekly market here on the Wednesday, and an annual fair. Dugdale supposes this market was discontinued, as Hotham, Bishop of Ely, to whom this lordship devolved, obtained in the reign of Edward the second, another charter for a weekly market, and an annual fair. This market has fallen into disuse, and is now no longer con-

tinued; but fairs are annually held here on April 29, May 10, and October 10 and 12.

The church at Solihull, dedicated to St. Alphage, is a large and very handsome structure, built in the form of a cross, and previous to the dissolution it was collegiate.

According to the returns made to Parliament in 1811, Solihull is stated to contain 521 houses, and 2,581 inhabitants.

Continuing our journey from Solihull, and at the distance of about a mile, we pass, to the right of the road, an elegant and commodious mansion, called *Malvern Hall*, the seat of Henry Greswold Lewis, Esq. surrounded by charming pleasure grounds and gardens. About two miles further, mid-way between Birmingham and Warwick, is KNOWLE, a chapelry in the parish of Hampton-in-Arden.

In the reign of King John, this lordship belonged to William de Arden, and from one of his descendants it passed to Eleanor, Queen of Edward the first, on whose death it was given with other lands to the monks of Westminster, on condition that on the even of St. Andrew, they should solemnly sing a placebo and dirge with nine lessons, one hundred wax candles weighing twelve pounds each being then burning about her tomb, during which time the bells, both great and small, all ringing, they should solemnly chaunt for the health of her soul, and the same to continue till high mass was ended.

In the reign of Richard the second, Walter Cooke, canon of Lincoln, erected a chapel here at his own expense. In the reign of Henry the fourth he also founded a chantry at this place for two priests; and also a gild, of which many persons of consequence became members. He likewise, with the widow of Lord Clinton, founded a college of chantry priests, but this institution appears to have declined; as at the dissolution, only two priests belonged to it, and its revenue was only £22 3 3 per annum. The income of the gild, supporting three priests, was £29 14 7 per annum.

The chapel is a spacious and handsome structure, and consists of a nave, two aisles, and a chancel. Its interior is well worthy of observation, and bears marks of its antiquity in its stone seats, stalls and piscinæ; the grotesque carved work with which it is embellished, and the fragments of stained glass in the windows.

It is recorded in the Archæologia, that in a field near Knowle an urn was ploughed up, of a dark brown colour, containing coins of the lower empire, weighing fifteen pounds.

Near Knowle is *Springfield House*, the delightful mansion of Joseph Boultbee, Esq.

HAMPTON-IN-ARDEN is near Knowle, and was anciently possessed by a family who assumed the name of Arden, one of whom, Hugh de Arden, in the reign of Henry the third, obtained a charter

for a weekly market to be held here on Tuesday, and an annual fair for three days.

"At Hampton-in-Arden, if a man possessed of an estate marries, and has several children the issue of that marriage, he cannot give it away by will, without his wife's consent, nor does it descend to his children; but the wife, after the death of her husband, has *then* the absolute power to give it to the children of another person, or to whom she pleases. In another manor in the same parish, if a widow marries, without having put her finger into a hole in a certain post, and there craved the consent of the lords of the manor, she forfeits her estate. It is much to be regretted, that such remnants of feudal absurdity cannot be done away."—*Murray's Agriculture of the County of Warwick.*

In this lordship were anciently two parks; one near the church, northwards, in which was a manor house, surrounded by a moat, that was visible in the time of Dugdale; the other was about a mile north-west of the church, in which was a castle, and its scite is still called castle hills.

The church at Hampton had formerly a tall spire, which was a very conspicuous object to the neighbouring country; but in 1643, the spire was beat down by a violent storm of thunder and lightning, and the tower and body of the church were much damaged.

BALSALL, commonly called *Balsall Temple,* is in the parish of Hampton-in-Arden. This lordship was given by Roger de Mowbray, in the reign of Henry the second, to the Knights Templars,* who erected a church here, and a house as a preceptory or cell, subordinate to their principal mansion, the Temple, in London. In the reign of Edward the second, the fraternity of Knights Templars was formerly dissolved, owing either to their own ill conduct, or more probably to their rising power; and their estates at Balsall were granted to the Knights Hospitallers,† in whose possession they continued till the dissolution, when they devolved to the crown.

* This was a religious fraternity, so called from their having resided near the Temple at Jerusalem; and according to their profession, they were to defend pilgrims in their passage to and from the holy city. They first came into England in the reign of Henry the second, and built a mansion in London still called the Temple. The dress they wore is thus described by Dugdale:--- "On their heads they wore linen coifes (like those used by Serjeants at Law,) and red caps close over them; their bodies were habited in shirts of mail, and swords girded unto them with a broad belt; over all which, they had a white cloak, reaching to the ground, with a red cross on the left shoulder,---their beards were worn of great length."

† These Knights derived their name from the hospital of St. John the Baptist, at Jerusalem, where they at first resided; and their profession was to entertain pilgrims coming to the holy land, and to defend and protect them in their journey to and from Jerusalem. After the infidels had seized upon Palestine, they obtained the Isle of Rhodes, as their place of residence; but after some obstinate assaults, that island being taken by the Turks, the Emperor Charles the fifth, granted them the Island of Malta.

Queen Elizabeth granted this manor from the crown to Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester; whose grand-daughter, Lady Catherine Leveson, bequeathed it for the purpose of founding a hospital for indigent women, either unmarried or widows. These women are chosen from the parishes of Balsall and Long Itchington, Warwickshire; Trentham, Staffordshire; and Lillenhall, Shropshire; the preference to be given to Balsall. In the act of endowment it was prescribed that a minister should be provided, "who should twice every day read the scripture, and pray, either in the church of Balsall, or house, hospital, or alms-house, with the said poor persons, and instruct them for the good of their souls, for which he should be allowed twenty pounds per annum; and instruct twenty of the poorest boys of the inhabitants of Balsall and parish, until they shall be fit to be apprentices, not taking any thing from their parents."

By good management, and the increased value of land, the annual income of this hospital amounts to near £1,500, which reflects infinite honour on those noblemen and gentlemen to whose care the direction of this benevolent institution has been intrusted. The number of alms women have increased at different periods: they at present amount to thirty. The trustees are the Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, the Earls of Warwick and Aylesford, and several of the principal gentlemen in the county—the whole is under the management of a master (Rev. J. Short,) with a salary of £150 per annum.

Balsall church cannot fail to attract the attention of the curious traveller, as it still exists in nearly the same state as when it was first erected by the Knights Templars, about seven centuries ago. It is of an oblong form, one hundred and four feet in length, thirty-nine in breadth, and fifty seven in height. At the east and west ends are lofty windows, and on each side three fine windows; the heads of all which are adorned with most beautiful tracery, displayed in a different manner in each. Large clusters of ivy cling to the walls of the church, (which are three feet in thickness,) overshadowing the windows, and producing a very picturesque appearance; and some of it has crept through small fissures into the interior. Over the west door is a turret which rises only to the centre of the roof. The interior of the church is not divided by aisles, and the chancel is distinguished only by a floor which rises three steps. The roofing is composed of timber, formerly parted into squares, at the angles of which were coats of arms, now removed into the great hall. At the east end of the church, in the south wall, are three stone stalls, or recesses.

The ancient *Hall of the Templars* stands near the church; it is said to have been one hundred and forty feet long, and appears to have been divided by large wooden pillars into three aisles. Though anciently a magnificent apartment, it now, being surrounded with brick work, assumes the humble appearance of a barn.

Continuing our journey from Knowle, and at the distance of about two miles from thence and eight from Warwick, about a mile to the right of the road, is the village of BADDESLEY CLINTON, where there is a mansion the seat of Edward Ferrers, Esq. called *Baddesley Clinton Hall.* This is a large ancient stone edifice, surrounded by a moat, over which is a bridge to an embattled gateway, the entrance to the mansion; which contains many curious remains of antiquity.

The church at this place is contigious to the mansion above mentioned, and is dedicated to St. Michael. It contains some monuments of the Ferrers family, and in the windows some fine relics of the beautifully painted glass which they formerly contained, still remain.

At Baddesley Clinton was born and lies buried *Edward Ferrars,* who wrote some tragedies and comodies, and was a great favourite of Henry the eighth. He died in 1654. Also at Baddesley Clinton was born and lies buried *Henry Ferrers,* a poet and antiquary, who made collections for the history of his native county, which are recorded to have laid the foundation of Dugdale's Antiquities. He was born in 1549 and died in 1633.

Continuing our journey, and about four miles from Knowle and six from Warwick, a short distance to the left of the road, is the village of WROXHALL, where was formerly a priory of Benedictine nuns,

founded by Hugh de Hatton, in the reign of King Stephen. Dugdale, in his Antiquities of Warwickshire, relates the occasion of its foundation, extracted from a historical manuscript, written by a priest or officer of the nunnery.

According to this account, Hugh de Hatton, (who held the lordship of Hatton and lands at Wroxhall of the Earl of Warwick,) going to war in the Holy Land, was there taken prisoner by the enemy and continued a captive for several years. At length, however, considering that his parish church was dedicated to St. Leonard, and that many wonderful miracles had been wrought by that saint, he earnestly prayed to him for deliverance from his captivity.—Accordingly St. Leonard appeared to him in his sleep, in the habit of a monk, bidding him arise and go home, and found an abbey for nuns of St. Benedict's order; but he took this for a dream, and well he might, as he was unable to comply with his command. The saint, however, again appeared to him as before, upon which, no longer doubting, he made a vow to found the nunnery according to the injunctions of the saint. He had no sooner made his vow than he was miraculously translated from his prison to the spot on which the nunnery was afterwards situated, in Wroxhall wood! Here then he was, literally dropt from the clouds, and so filled with wonder that he scarcely knew how he came there, or in what part of the world he was! Fortunately a

shepherd of his own coming by at the time, he discovered that he was upon his own estate, and near his house. His lady being informed of his unexpected arrival, would not believe that it was her husband, until he shewed her part of a ring that had been broken between them, and which, as soon as it was applied to the other piece in her possession, they were miraculously re-united! He now returned thanks to God and St. Leonard, and prayed to the saint to point out to him the spot on which to erect the nunnery, who again appearing, shewed him four stones, which marked the spot where afterwards stood the high altar!!

The annual revenue of this establishment at the dissolution, was £72 12 6, above all reprises; and the scite of the priory and surrounding domains, were granted to Robert Burgoyne and John Scudamore.

A portion of the remains of the priory is converted into a farm house, and another part forms the church at Wroxhall, in which there still remains a monument to one of the abbesses. The windows of the church are adorned by finely-executed painted glass; and there are monumental inscriptions to the memory of several of the Wren family.

The manor of Wroxhall was purchased in 1713, by the celebrated architect Sir Christopher Wren, whose descendant, Christopher Wren, Esq. still enjoys it. The manor house is a large building, erected by Robert Burgoyne before-mentioned, and it has recently received great alterations and improvements.

HONILY is a short distance from Wroxhall, on the opposite side of the turnpike road; in fact Wroxhall is in the parish of Honily. The lordship of Honily was anciently an *Episcopal Bishopric,* with a peculiar jurisdiction of itself. There was a church dedicated to St. John, to which pilgrims came from distant parts to offer to St. John for the sins they had committed. There was also St. John's well, the water of which was called the *water of life,* and St. John's bath, which as the document Dr. Thomas copied, says "was for such men as had offended God, and lived a lewd life, and had gotten maidens or women with child." These *poor sinners,* after the delivery of the child, were to repair to St. John's bath, and after bathing themselves, to go to the church; where after various ceremonies, they gave something for the *support of the saint* to the monk who officiated; and were then commanded to take a bottle of the water of St. John's well, called the *water of life,* and told that it would cleanse them from all their sins! The women, likewise, after child-birth, repaired to the bath in a similar manner, and then to the church, and went through the same ceremonies as the men. It appears that there were one or two of these pilgrims every week in the year; and the pilgrims could not afterwards be called to account for the sins they had committed!

Resuming our journey, and at the distance of about seven miles from Knowle, and three from Warwick,

is the pleasant but small village of HATTON, originally, according to Dugdale called *Heath Town*, from the heathy tract of land near which it is situated. It anciently formed part of the immense possessions of Henry de Newburgh, Earl of Warwick, of whom it was held by Hugh de Hatton, the founder of Wroxhall priory, who fixed his chief residence near it, and from hence assumed his surname.

Hatton derives great celebrity in the present age, from its being the residence of the very learned and celebrated Dr. Parr, to whom the living belongs.—The parsonage-house where he resides is a commodious residence, and in it is a large room containing a fine collection of valuable books.

The church at Hatton presents a rural appearance, and its interior is kept very neat. The windows are ornamented with finely-executed painted glass, the work of Mr. Egginton, of Birmingham; and which embellishment is owing to the taste and liberality of Dr. Parr. The eastern window is a representation of the crucifixion, St. Peter, St. Paul, &c. There are many monumental records in the church; and several inscriptions are from the classical pen of Dr. Parr.

On leaving Hatton for Warwick, we descend a considerable hill, from which an extensive and pleasing prospect is obtained over finely wooded and highly cultivated country, in the midst of which is situated the town of Warwick. About two miles

from Hatton we pass on the right a newly-built handsome mansion, the residence of John Edwards, Esq. On the left of the road for a considerable distance previous and after passing the above mansion was *Wedgnock Park,* originally made by Henry de Newburgh, the first Norman Earl of Warwick.—This is mentioned to have been the second park known in England, the first being the one at Woodstock, imparked by King Henry the first. Wedgnock park is now enclosed, and used for agricultural purposes, except a small portion in which a few deer are kept; it is the property of the Earl of Warwick.

Three miles from Hatton we arrive at Warwick,—from whence we set out,—and which having been before noticed (see page 23), we conclude our journies; believing we have noticed every place worthy of attention in the county.

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