EXCURSIONS ON DARTMOOR

Ellen Cox

A

JOURNAL

OF

TEN DAYS EXCURSION

ON THE

WESTERN AND NORTHERN BORDERS

OF

DARTMOOR.

BY MISS DIXON,

Author of "CASTALIAN HOURS," &c., &c.

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&c., &c.

WEDNESDAY, May 19th, 1830, left Princetown at half-past four o'clock—a pleasant mild morning; the larks soaring up and singing at every step. Proceeded to Merivale Bridge, and thence over the heath by Vixen Tor and Moortown to Whitechurch Down. Reached Tavistock about half-past seven, and two miles and a half further on the road passed the small brook called the Lumber, from which is derived the name of the adjacent village of Lamerton. The soil in this vicinity appears very fertile, and the prospects fresh and pleasant. On the side of the road, leading through some fields near the village, is a singular *stile*, formed of many divisions and bars of granite, having a very curious appearance. Adjoining the road near this spot is a fantastically designed dwelling house, built by Major Parson, a confirmed bachelor, who died of vexation at his lonely condition.

Arrived at Belgrove, the residence of Mr. Rundle, at nine o'clock, where we partook of breakfast, which our long morning walk had rendered highly necessary. Half a mile from thence we passed Willestrue, the birth-place of Nicholas Rowe, author of Jane Shore, &c. The house is situated on the declivity of a gentle hill, overlooking a pleasant wooded valley, which had in one place been filled up to carry across the new line of turnpike-road from Tavistock to Launceston.

Two miles further on is a School-room, built at a great expence by the Duke of Bedford, and having the words "MILTON-ABBOT FREE-SCHOOL" inserted over the doorway. An anecdote connected with the erection of this school-room should be here mentioned, as illustrating the motives by which the influential persons of the neighbourhood are actuated. Twelve years ago the inhabitants of the parish, and others, subscribed a considerable sum, for the purpose of erecting a

school-house and maintaining the school afterwards; but, as the vicar, Dr. Jago, had set his face against all such innovations, he contrived to retard the execution of this design during that space of time. This circumstance suggests the melancholy fact, that at least, one thousand children were thus, in the course of that twelve years, deprived of the advantages of a useful education, and society exposed to all the unhappy chances which must arise from so large a number of its members remaining under the influence of ignorance and prejudice—whilst talents that might have become a source of benefit to the community at large, have been restrained and perverted by want of cultivation, or entirely destroyed through neglect. On this being represented to the public through the medium of the press, all on a sudden the workmen were set on, and the work proceeded rapidly. But the Duke of Bedford has taken upon himself the whole charge of it, in order to keep the affair in the hands of the *Exclusives*, so as to manage matters at their own will and discretion, the effect of which will most probably be, to render the establishment entirely useless for the proper purposes of education. Immediately opposite, on the other side of the road, are two lodges appertaining to Endsleigh Cottage; only worthy of notice to condemn the highly untasteful and inconvenient style in which they are erected;—a portion of sundry more extensive follies of the like description hereafter to be mentioned. Ascending the hill from these lodges we obtained a very interesting view of the village of Milton Abbot, embowered in trees, above which the Church Tower rises a conspicuous object. Rich enclosures and luxuriant meadows surround the village, and render the whole prospect exceedingly pleasant.

About half a mile further on, stands the entrance lodge to Endsleigh Cottage, of the same character as those already noticed. From this lodge to the house is a continued descent for three-quarters of a mile, principally through a thick plantation of ornamental shrubs, disposed without taste, and barbarously intermingled with rude half-withered furze-bushes, briars, and nettles, intended perhaps as the evidence of rusti-

city, but certainly showing an entire want of judgment, and producing a very unpleasing effect, as the contrivance is at once perceived to be clumsy;—the fact of delicate-blossoming shrubs growing from the midst of brambles and furzes, being altogether unnatural and incongruous. We now reached the Cottage, the first aspect of which presents nothing striking, the approach being through a common gravel courtyard, and the colour and appearance of the building dingy. The walls are coated with Roman cement spotted to resemble stone, which it does but imperfectly.

Proceeding to the interior, the entrance hall may perhaps be considered as the best apartment in the house. The next is the dining room, wainscotted half-way up, and decorated with a large number (perhaps more than fifty) coats of arms, belonging to the Russells and their connexions, emblazoned on the pannelling, but small, and having a tawdry appearance; such sort of decoration seeming entirely out of place in a building meant to possess a rural and inartificial character. In a small antichamber are some good views of Cintra; and the drawing-room is decorated with showy but unsubstantial furniture; and the library has a small collection of books, which we had no opportunity of examining, as visiters are prohibited taking them off the shelves. Some other apartments occur on the basement story, not worth particular notice, except a china closet, which exhibits a fanciful assortment of vessels in form of bunches of asparagus, cauliflowers, cabbages, &c., which style cannot be commended. The bedrooms are of a common description, and the beds far from superb; several of them being in the French fashion, and scarcely of dimensions for one person to find easy accommodation. We were told as many as fifty beds can be made up in the house; but no more than ten or twelve are shown to visiters. A long dark passage joins another portion of the building, which contains the children's apartments, but these we did not see. The stables are situated so close to the dwelling house as to suggest the idea of their being very annoying. Our next object was an old well, placed some way off on the borders of a small pond, and bearing a modern inscription describing it to be removed from Leigh, a

hunting seat anciently belonging to the Abbot of Tavistock, and situated about a mile distant.

Returning from this spot, we crossed a brook, on a rustic wooden bridge, and visited the far-famed Dairy, which is said to have cost £2000., though, in fact, nothing without or within it exhibits any marks of such expence. The raw-cream dairy is a small apartment, with a bubbling fountain of water in the midst. On stands round the wall are eight polished marble troughs for holding the milk;—these troughs have a deep groove behind each for passing through them a running stream of water; and an aperture in the bottom serves to drain the contents when required. A marble slab placed above the fountain has arranged on it various dishes, vases, &c., necessary to the operations of a dairy. Below stairs is a very inferior Devonshire dairy, with brass pans, &c. The dell in which this dairy-house is placed, is very beautiful, if the false taste of its inconsistent decorations be put out of sight. The principal fault is the introduction of an overwhelming number of Rhododendrons, which are lavished in clumps and plots without mercy, and often where their intrusion entirely spoils the effect which the fine natural disposition of the valley would have produced. The walk that ascends by the little brook is very pleasing as it winds amid the plantations, and reaches the termination of the Endsleigh estate in that direction. The return is by an artificial water-course, bounded on the north by a thick skreen of Firs and forest timber, until it reaches a rustic seat, close by which is a fall of water of five or six feet; but at this time, the stream which supplies it was turned in another direction. From this seat is a pleasant prospect of the dell itself, the river Tamar, and the woods below; one end only of the Cottage being visible from this scite.

Retracing our steps, we again approached the house, and inspected the front of the building, which is decorated with the figure of an Abbot, some armorial emblems, &c. The Flower-garden is in keeping with the other portions already described —tawdry and trifling. A Grotto, formed of ores and shells, petrifactions and painted glass, with a rill of bubbling water, is equally destitute of interest; and we proceeded to the really

attractive part of the domain, the wood on the opposite slope, where, although the trees are young and small, the ancient timber having been taken down before the recent adornments were begun, an admirer of pastoral beauty may discover scenes and glimpses that restore to us the genuine forms of nature, unspoiled by the wilful interference of tasteless disarrangements. This wood is intersected by numerous paths passing and repassing, with a really natural intricacy that offends neither the eye nor the judgment, and induces a supposition that the wood itself must be of considerably greater extent than in fact it is—a most agreeable and proper effect, as there is always a much more powerful impression on the mind when we find ourselves unaware of boundary, and beguiled into a supposition that the limits of the scene lie far beyond us. On the ridge of the slope a long rural hedge-row path conducts to the Swiss Cottage, which is certainly pretty, especially so, as the prospect visible from the balcony has much of the Swiss character, the Cornish hills forming a good back ground to the green wooded slopes and gentle windings of the Tamar in the recesses of the valley below. From the Swiss Cottage we descended the precipitous paths of the wood, passing the Abbot's rock, so called from its vicinity to the Abbot of Tavistock's hunting seat of Leigh before mentioned. Re-entering the ornamental shrubbery, we proceeded by a very agreeable turf walk to the Gardener's house or lodge, of the same style as those already described. The gardens exhibit nothing striking, but appear very fertile and carefully cultivated, being planted with abundance of fruit trees, which seemed all in the best condition. In the centre is a trelliced arbor, and small circular pond with a jet-d'eau for watering the garden. Various flowers interspersed in the borders and among the fruit trees and vegetables exhibit a very gay appearance.

The cost of the Cottage of Endsleigh, with its mis-arranged grounds, and their fantastic decorations, is reported at £120,000; but in truth it is difficult to discover, or even imagine in what way so large a sum has been expended, or rather wasted on this spot.

Having thus finished our inspection of the Duke's domain, we crossed several fields on the southern ridge of the declivity, where we had a good opportunity of remarking the extent and beauty of this singular valley, which opens as it descends with the course of the river, displaying on either hand its fine woody slopes, in all the charm and diversity of vernal foliage. This rich vale is the continuation of Edgcumbe, situated immediately above. We were informed that this lower portion, comprising the estate of Endsleigh, was alienated in the 14th century by one of the Edgcumbes, who bestowed it on the Abbot of Tavistock, to whom it belonged until the period of the reformation, when it was conferred, with the other Abbey lands, on the Russells, ancestors of the present possessor.

We now arrived at Edgcumbe, where we emptied our provision basket, and partook of a travelling collation in the tenant's parlour. Edgcumbe House is a very ancient building, the date of its erection on a projecting stone in part of the old wall is 1292, with the initials R. E. adjoined, which period various traces of antiquity fully bear out. Several fractions of arches sculptured with a leaf ornament lie in the court yard; these must have belonged to a principal entrance, and perhaps to that of the porter's lodge, which stood on the opposite side of a space, formerly enclosed by buildings appropriated to domestic purposes. The portions of the house now remaining bear the date of its repair in 1719. All the interior dispositions have an air of strength and stability not found in modern mansions, and seem as if intended to withstand the effects of time for some centuries to come. The old dining room has a ceiling embellished with compartments and ornamental devises in carving and plaster. The date of the room is 1565 under the armorial bearings (the boar's head) over the fire place, where also are the initials T. P. E. for Thomas and Prothesia Edgcumbe. The house is situated on the very *edge* or entrance of the *coom, combe,* or valley, whence the family name. A branch of this family having married the heiress of Cotehele, obtained that possession, and one of their descendants, intermarrying with the heiress of the Dernford family, transferred the ancient name to West Stonehouse, now Mount Edgcumbe.

A pathway across rich meadows brought us to the village of Milton Abbot, so designated from the former proprietor, the Abbot of Tavistock. The village principally belongs to Capt. Edgcumbe. Its aspect is neat, the houses generally being well built and convenient of their size. The church is a plain erection, with a very strongly-built tower of dark-coloured stone, which the excellent taste of the parish authorities has induced them to whitewash; whether as a direction by which strayed rustics may find their way home after a holiday carouse, we leave to the curious in such matters to determine. The interior has nothing peculiar: the roof is ornamented with tracery; and the only painted glass is in the upper part of a window over a pew belonging to the Edgcumbe family, bearing their arms properly emblazoned, but of what date does not appear. The pew of the Duke of Bedford is also adorned with his arms painted on the panelling. A small hand organ, well-toned of its kind, was given to this church by the Duke. Our direction was now taken through several pleasant fields and shady lanes towards Horsa Bridge, over the Tamar, about three miles distant, where we terminated this day's excursion, having travelled, from the time of our leaving the Prisons, twenty-five or thirty miles, and continued walking, with slight interruption, during a period of fifteen hours.

THURSDAY, 20th May. Arose at five o'clock, and soon after set forward on our road to visit Cotehele. In passing, we may mention Horsa Bridge as ancient and well built; the river is here deep and placid, exhibiting that peculiar character of gentleness from which its name is supposed to be derived; the meadows on each side are extremely fine, and rows of trees on the banks, give a fresh and cheerful aspect to the scene. Near this spot is Whiteford, the seat of Sir William Call, whose father, the original proprietor and builder of the house, amassed a large fortune in the East, and returning to his native country, purchased the principal part of the parish of Stoke-Climsland, in which Whiteford is situated.

A walk among shady hedges brought us in contact with a decayed mansion, formerly belonging to the family of Phillips, now extinct; further on we passed the small village of Lucket,

and a little stream, which we were told is called the Lucket Brook, but it has perhaps some more definite name, unknown, as is common, in such cases, to the nearest inhabitants. A long and tedious ascent from this place brought us to Hengist Down, so called, it is said, in consequence of a battle there fought between the Saxons and the Cornish Britons. On the summit are three mounds or barrows, principally formed of earth, standing in a line from east to west; the most easterly having been opened and cut through, but nothing appears to elucidate the purpose of their erection. We now descended the southern side of the down toward Cotehele, and perceived many glimpses of the winding Tamar along the adjacent country. The church and village of St. Dominick are conspicuous on the opposite hill, also the triangular ornamental tower, about thirty-five feet high, placed in Cotehele grounds. This building is visible from Mount Edgcumbe. A number of fine forest trees, enlivened by an extensive rookery, conceal the house during the approach, but a circuitous path brings the visiter, rather suddenly, to the gateway, surmounted by a tower, about thirty feet high, being four stories, ascended within by flights of granite steps leading to the roof, which is surrounded by a battlement reaching breast-high; from this tower we have the best view of the house, particularly of the upper stories, which are thus presented more immediately before the eye than they can be below. Descending to the court-yard the range of buildings is perceived to extend on each side, forming a regular square, divided in the midst by an ascent of two steps, and having separate entrances to the house and offices, one by an archway and four steps on the northern side, the other immediately opposite the porter's lodge and conducting to the great hall. The archway of this door is particularly fine, having a carved ornament of leaves and what appears to be a shield over the centre seemingly devoid of any distinctive change or bearing. A similar shield is found among the quarterings, emblazoned on the windows both of this hall and the chapel. The hall itself is a lofty room about thirty or thirty-two feet in length, by fifteen or sixteen broad. On the walls are displayed an assortment of the armour and weapons of former times, consisting of various

swords, muskets, &c., all now covered with rust, or otherwise going to decay. These are interspersed with the antlers of Stags, Antelopes' horns, and sundry spoils of beasts and fishes, regarded as natural curiosities. A small shield is painted with a coloured device, but being hung far up the wall, the figures were not clearly perceptible. At the upper end is a bracket, sustaining a wooden figure, meant to represent an armed warrior; but whatever may be said for the design, the execution is quite out of character, and the steel-clad Knights of older times are miserably libelled by this attempt at an exhibition of their stern countenances and athletic forms; the figure being fit only for a scare-crow ought really to be removed, out of respect to the venerable mansion which it disgraces. In this hall we breakfasted, and had therefore particular opportunity for noting its arrangements. A huge granite chimney piece is situated near the higher end, and at the lower are three doors with fine Gothic archways of granite, which conduct to the kitchen and inferior apartments. The windows are decorated with the armorial bearings of various owners of the mansion, and their connexions: these are splendidly emblazoned; and one in a circular shield on the upper window is said to be very ancient. Many of these coats of arms are of a period prior to the intermarriage of the Cotehele and Edgcumbe families The floor is lime-ash. A massive granite archway leads to the dining room; a light and elegant apartment, with large Gothic windows, divided by thick stone mullions. The aspect is nearly south, and the rays of the morning sun shining through the casements displayed them to considerable advantage, and cast a kind of cheerful splendor upon the whole apartment. The walls are hung with tapestry of a very superior description; the scenes chiefly pastoral, and two pieces placed on each side of the chimney are particularly distinguishable for a fine attention to the rules of perspective, which from the opposite side of the room produces a most striking effect; the windings among the trees and depths of the wood appearing with the truth of nature. In that to the right of the fire place is a tree especially beautiful, the sunshine falling on one side of it, being excellently contrasted with the dark green of the shadowed part. The

piece at the lower end has a garden scene with a fountain, and the story of Eurydice, in which the viper is an extremely accurate resemblance to nature. The sofas and cushions were originally embroidered in gold and silver, and must have had an extremely splendid appearance.

A private entrance concealed by the hangings leads to the chapel. A small Gothic appartment, having two windows adorned with painted glass, displaying the armorial bearings of the family. The wall is wainscotted half-way up, and the floor paved with rough tiles or bricks. A skreen divides it into two parts; that below the southern window being appropriated to the family, the other to the domestics. Returning through the dining room we entered the breakfast parlour, a small square room, the tapestry hangings represent, by the usual allegorical figuers, and patron deities, the whole range of arts and sciences; but the colours being faded, the appearance is become dingy. In this room are several curiously formed chairs, old candlesticks, and other things of the same description.

A stone archway and steps lead from this to the next story, the first room of which is a bed-room, having a richly turned or carved bedstead, with white hangings. This bed we were informed, was brought from France by Sir Richard Edgcumbe, to whom it was presented by the King. The tapestry is light and cheerful, representing the different operations of a vintage; and the high-backed chairs are said to be of the age of Elizabeth. The red bed-room is large and light; at one end is a piece of tapestry, the subject the combat of Romulus and Remus, in which the expression of agony in a wounded horse is extremely fine. The other scenes are allegorical and pastoral. This apartment opens to the state bed-room, where we find the tapestry exhibiting a huntsman with his hand resting on the neck of a greyhound, and attended by an individual of all the different varities of sporting dogs; the bulldog, mastiff, bloodhound, wolfdog pointer, &c., all of a particularly fine and natural character, and done in colours, which seem to retain all their first freshness and beauty. The bed hangings are white jean, worked in a pattern with red silk. A richly inlaid antique ca-

binet stands beside the entrance, and between the windows a looking glass with a curiously adorned frame. In this apartment is the altar cloth of crimson velvet, brought from the chapel: the figures which adorn it, represent Christ and the twelve apostles, embroidered in gold and blue silk. This is considered one of the most antique articles in the house, but retains nothing of its beauty, and has been much injured by time and repairing. On the next story is the china closet, in which are some articles of curiosity, but nothing very remarkable. A small bed-room, with a dark-coloured bed, contains a few old books, chiefly theological, and the only volumes now in the house; a curious old music-book described by tourists, with characters different from those in present use, having been recently removed to Mount Edgcumbe. The drawing room is ascended by several granite steps, and the entrance has a carved semicircular skreen, said to have been placed there by Sir Richard Edgcumbe. This apartment has a fine appearance; the style of the furniture and decorations being perfectly in character with the architecture. A noble Gothic window, divided by stately granite mullions, looks towards the north, and a smaller one to the east. The furniture consists of an exceedingly handsome carved ebony cabinet, and small chairs to correspond—all of ebony. The tapestry has a mythological device of Jupiter, with an eagle and thunderbolts, attended by Minerva and several goddesses. The uppermost story in this part of the house presents two apartments. A small room in which the bed conceals a piece of tapestry with a vintage scene, and another room called King Charles the Second's bed-room, that king having slept there, but on what occasion we were not informed. The massive bedstead is elaborately carved, but has a heavy appearance, which is increased by the hangings of dark-colored cloth, richly embroidered. The tapestry represents the loves of Hero and Leander, but the hues are all of a sombre description, heightened also by the darkness of the room itself, which is lighted by only two small windows. Among the furniture is a looking-glass, with a carved frame, rich but heavy. All the entrances, even to the rooms on the highest story, are under archways of fine granite, conveying an appearance of stability

and lightness, and from their freshness, might be almost supposed of recent erection, except that the style of modern building forbids such a conclusion. Perhaps there are fifty of these elegant Gothic doorways in the house and offices. The fire places throughout the mansion are hearths of large dimensions, with massive granite chimney pieces.

An extensive wood of fine old trees clothes the valley that runs eastward from the house toward the Tamar; and proceeding by winding paths, we gain the celebrated rock, rising over the river, in a perpendicular direction, thirty or forty feet in height. This was the site of the story related of Sir Richard Edgcumbe, during the wars between the houses of York and Lancaster. Sir Richard being an adherent of the Earl of Richmond, afterwards Henry VII, was on some occasion pursued by a party of the Yorkists, but passing close to the verge of the rock, he flung his cap into the water, and thus deceived the victorious party into a belief that he had thrown himself headlong from the precipice; upon which they gave over their pursuit, and afforded him an opportunity of escape into France. After the death of Richard III, and the consequent safety of Henry's followers, Sir Richard erected the chapel now standing on the spot, as a testimony of gratitude to heaven for his singular preservation. This little oratory is situated no more than two yards from the edge of the rock, and has a window of painted glass, looking immediately toward the river. Here are emblazoned a variety of armorial emblems, of the same kind as those on the windows of the hall described. Among them a shield bearing a blue chevron and three blue shells, quartered with the family arms. This alliance must have been considered of some importance, as the emblems of it are frequently met with throughout the heraldic decorations of the mansion. An extract from Carew's Survey of Cornwall, is placed in the chapel, relating the legend. A small wooden image of a mitred priest, holding a crosier, stands on a bracket beside the window, and two or three old dark-colored paintings are suspended from the walls.

Lower down the wood are some very large Spanish chesnut-trees; and one may be particularly distinguished, its dimensi-

one being no less than thirty-one feet in circumferance, and rising seven or eight before it separates into three branches, each the size of a large tree. At the termination of the wood is a lime-kiln, situated close to the river, and from this place we retraced our steps, and followed a winding pathway beneath the old trees, affording many fine openings towards the river. At length it descends to a most precipitous dell, bearing the name of Danescombe, perhaps, from having been a retreat of those audacious maraunders, at times when they sailed up the Tamar to plunder the adjacent country. The sudden descent and steepness of this valley render it very remarkable; and the scene becomes beautiful, as well as striking, by the fine old forest trees on the Cotehele side, which bend over its wild declivities. A foot-road traced on the margin of the river brought us to Calstock—a small town possessing nothing to attract attention—and thence following a hilly path over several fields, which look down upon the course of the Tamar, and toward the opposite ascent with its woods and meadows, we passed by Harewood, the residence of Mr. Trelawney, and descended to the ferry at Morwelham, which we crossed in a very dirty and leaky boat, and reaching the village, found that our walk had rendered a short time for rest necessary to recruit our strength; and here therefore we reposed ourselves for about two hours before proceeding on our journey. At this place is a quay on the banks of the river, and consequently much bustle. An inclined plane in the neighbourhood is the means of communication with the Tavistock Canal, which terminates on the brow of a precipitous hill. A very romantic path winding over the slopes of a woody ascent, conducted us to Morwell Rock, a remarkable precipice, rising above the Tamar, which here contracts its breadth, and making nearly a right angle, diminishes considerably on the eye as it is viewed in the upward direction. The rock itself, with its perpendicular face, towering from the stream below, has a grand and impressive aspect, an effect heightened also by the whole cast of the neighbouring scenery, which is rude and wild; the abrupt steeps being intersected with projecting rocks, and clothed with coppice and scattered trees, over-hanging the deep dell through

which the Tamar passes smoothly and tranquilly along its course.

On the summit of the rock we rested awhile, contemplating the prospect around us, and then walked about a quarter of a mile to Morwell House—in ancient days of ecclesiastical pomp and luxury, a country seat of the Abbots of Tavistock, who, with the usual degree of priestly discernment in such matters, neglected no source of gratification which the romantic vicinity of their rich and splendid domicile afforded. This rural retreat is now simply occupied as a farm-house, but still possesses some few indications of its original consequence. Fine stone archways are remaining at the entrances of the porter's lodge, dwelling, and other buildings, and the chapel, now used as a kitchen, has a portion of painted glass yet left in the old Gothic window, with some other marks of its former destination. Another apartment displays the remains of an ornamented ceiling; but even these slight traces of previous dignity, are fast decaying, and bid fair to be soon altogether obliterated. We then proceeded to Lamerton, where we took tea, and shortly after hastened in the direction of Brentor, at which place it was our intention to pass the night. After leaving the enclosed country, we ascended Heathfield, a wide track of common, from whence the view of the surrounding districts is very extensive; the Cornish hills again forming the back ground of our prospect. About midway on the down, the sun set, and we presently saw the tower of Brentor Church rising immediately before us. The wind now blew exceedingly strong and chilling: evening closed on us apace, and became dusk when we reached the house where our arrangements rendered it expedient we should remain for the night. A good fire and plentiful supper were soon prepared, and we found that the fatigues of the day rendered a night of repose both necessary and agreeable.

FRIDAY, 21st May. At five o'clock our pedestrians were again in motion; and the first object of notice was a singular fortification, for so we esteemed it to be, encompassing the Brentor Rock on that side which admitted approach, and terminating on either hand, at the rock itself, in places where

the natural steepness formed a sufficient barrier. This defence consists of many mounds of earth, which originally might have been regularly faced and raised breast high, running one above another in a circular direction, forming a regular fortified amphitheatre from the valley to the brow of the rock. Some of the mounds are very discernibly traced through their whole extent; others have been divided to form the approach to the church, and possibly also to clear the ground, and furnish building materials for its erection, as many of the lines are in part composed of stones, probably collected from the neighbouring slopes, in aid of the work. Against one of them the boundary wall or hedge of an adjoining field is built. This mound is perhaps, the most considerable remaining, and many others are to be found circling the hill through the enclosures as they descend to the valley below. The probability is, that this work was Danish, and intended to secure a strong hold to which they might withdraw and convey their spoil after ravaging the country, and plundering the towns of the vicinity; it being well known that such was their regular practice, and that the neighbouring town of Lidford was frequently attacked by these active and rapacious hordes. Also that the Abbey of Tavistock suffered greatly, and was at one time even destroyed during their incursions. The small church on the summit of the hill is noted for the old legend connected with its erection. The tower may be about forty feet high, and the whole is of the poorest description of parish churches, and presents nothing worthy of further notice.

After proceeding two miles in a northerly direction, we turned on the left into a private road through the estate of Mr. Clobery, and passing a pleasant shadowy lane, reached a hilly field, below which the valley of the Lid extends from N. E. to S. W. while Hazelter rises in stern solemnity on the west. Here a noble prospect of the opposite country burst upon us, the steeps being covered with trees and declining abruptly into the depths of the dell, the whole forming a fine and bold picture, placed also in singular contrast with the cultivated country, which here forms the back-ground of the scenery. The circumstances of the ruder and darker scenes being the

nearest to the eye, and the softer colors of the landscape placed behind and in the distance, gives to the prospect a very peculiar effect. About one mile further brought us to the vicinity of Lidford Waterfall, and having been accommodated with a room, &c., to breakfast at the farm-house, we took the path down the coppice, where the Cascade descends. A short way within the gate a noble glimpse of scenery arrested the eye, breaking amidst a vista through the trees, and discovering the precipitous descents of the hills, which lift their wooded and almost perpendicular sides from the vale, or rather ravine, in which the Lid seems forcing a passage for its waters. The dark recesses of the glen, showed in fine contrast to the light shed upon the steeps by the morning sun, and the face of the hills on one side being illuminated, while that opposite, still rested in shadow, added considerably to the powerful effects of the prospect. At the upper end of the valley, Lidford Castle and Church display their grey and time-worn aspect, lingering on the eye in the distance, and forming a singular and consistent termination to the scene. Midway of the winding path, turning to the right, we struck into a narrow way around a rock, which leads to the principal division of the cascade. Here we saw one half above us and the other half descending below: had the fall been swelled by floods, or even by an ordinary rainy season, the effect would have been more striking; but at this time, every brook and stream were so much reduced, by many weeks of warm and dry weather, that we found it necessary in several instances to exert some power of imagination to make up for a deficiency of grandeur in the water scenes which invited attention during our journey. On arriving below at the foot of the fall, the same observation suggested itself. The stream was so shallow that as a cataract the scene had little power; it descended in a white foamy coloumn, joining the Lid below, but now diminished to a very inconsiderable brook. The fine witch-elm, which a few years since added much to the scene at the termination of the fall, has been recently taken down, and was immediately missed from its place by those of our party who had visited the spot before. The woods are all of an inferior description, being mostly copse, but a fine variety

of wild flowering shrubs and flowers are found by the river, and on the surrounding hills.

Returning to the farm-house we found breakfast ready, and after due rest and refreshment we sought the celebrated bridge which spans the channel of the Lyd, over a chasm, of whose horrors we have all heard from our earliest recollection. Those horrors of course are wonderfully magnified by common report. The depth beneath the bridge may be about seventy or eighty feet, but as the sides of the precipice are clothed with trees, that intertwine their branches thickly above the stream, any grandeur, which the place may really be possessed of, fails to appear before the eye. Crossing an adjoining field and brake, we again met the Lyd, in a state of tranquility at the foot of the chasm, where it is also joined by a brook coming down the deep valley of Broomacombe. Here the water of the Lyd is much discolored by the refuse of the lead mine situated some little distance above. This mineral admixture appears to have caused the destruction of the fish, as we found many dead trouts lying in the water at this place. A narrow and intricate path, winding through the dell of Broomacombe, brought us to a very singular site, being, to all appearance, the remains of a fortification, that encircled the hill with many lines or mounds, forming a breast-work of the same kind as that at Brentor, but of yet more considerable extent, reaching to the eastern side of the hill on which Lidford stands. Probably in its original direction it entirely surrounded the hill, which is naturally calculated to render very strong any work of art constructed for the defences of a military hold. On the summit of the hill, overlooking the course of the Lyd, and valley of Broomacombe, is a circular mound, of full twenty yards in diameter, where in all probability stood a castle or fortress of a date long prior to the erection of the present castle, which is situated very little to the N. E. of this more ancient one, the materials of which may have been removed to assist the construction of that now standing. To whom this fortification is ascribable may be matter of doubt, but possibly the Danes, who reaped so rich a harvest of spoil in the neighbouring districts, were the authors of a work intended to serve the same purposes

of retreat and security as that already mentioned at Brentor. Similar remains of fortification exist, as we were informed, at Willesley Tor, in the parish of Milton Abbot, about three miles to the west of Brentor, where the rock forms at one point, a natural defence, and is met by lines of breast-work, or embankments, still very plainly apparent through the surrounding, now cultivated fields. Leaving the town of Lidford we again crossed the river, and passing the little adjacent common, came to Cate's Mine, a shaft of recent date, from whence is obtained lead ore of good quality. Near this is Cate's Fall, where the Lyd formerly precipitated itself through a rocky cleft, forming a cataract of more striking effect than even the noted cascade; but the whole of the stream being now taken up in leats for the use of the wheels which are employed at the mine, nothing of it remains to attract attention.

Our destination being Oakhampton, we passed another bridge over the Lyd, and followed the turnpike-road until it diverged by a steep lane, to the open downs above, where we once more set our feet upon the heather, and beheld the rough Tors and wild range of mountain-scenery thronging upon the eye in all the rugged majesty of untamed nature. The path which we pursued led over several steep ascents and through vallies of considerable depths. One of the former, Great Noddon, brought Granite Tor, Wood-cock Hill, and Great Lynch Tor, exactly on our right, forming a prospect of stern and imposing grandeur. In the midst of these hills and combes, we passed near the source of the Lyd, and then altering the direction of our steps the Sourton Tors rose before us, until again diverging to the right we came in view of the West Ockment, winding amid a rocky channel, below a descent almost precipitous. From the side of this descent a prospect presents itself, of which description can convey but an imperfect idea, the objects being so few and simple, while the impression on the admirer of mountain-scenery, is forcible in the highest degree. The valley inclining almost to a ravine, the river enters by a winding channel at the foot of Black Tor, which closes the view in a southerly direction. An extensive range of hill, dark with heath, occupies the opposite side of the valley, while a third

mountain meets it below. The whole impression arises from the combined effect of depth and height, unassisted by any of those circumstances of extent, variety, or coloring, which naturally bestow interest on mountain-landscapes. The scene is in fact one seldom met with, even among the Dartmoor hills, abounding as they do with prospects of grandeur and solemn beauty, and a beholder only, can fully appreciate the solitary and desert magnificence of the view presented in the glen of the West Ockment at this spot.

Following the course of the river, we passed a Lime Quarry, at a place called Meldon, near to which is a plank across the river, which would have brought us to Oakhampton by the nearest route over the park; but, ascending the hill, we took a path through some fields which led to the public road, and arrived at Oakhampton at half-past four o'clock, sufficiently tired with a walk of twenty-eight or thirty miles, the largest portion of which was over hills, where the wind blew with such violence that we had extreme difficulty to proceed at all.

SATURDAY, 22nd May. Despite of our fatigue, we had last evening walked out to view the town, although the showers of a distant thunder storm, having arrived just after ourselves, we found the ground wet and the air chilly: but this morning, the weather proving favorable, we proceeded before breakfast to survey the church, that is, the exterior, as we did not, on this occasion, visit it within. The appearance of the building renders it probable, that it was built at different opportunities, or added to by degrees as found expedient. The windows in particular mark this fact, as they are in very dissimilar styles of architecture, and some of them modern and devoid of any style or elegance whatever. The church-yard is thickly set with elm and oak trees, and one entrance is paved from the gate to the church, with old grave-stones, chiefly of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which having been superseded and removed, are here placed again to a purpose of utility. Several monumental tablets against the church-wall bear dates of one or two centuries back, but we saw no sepulchral inscriptions of an older period.

Having breakfasted, the next object of attention was the

ruins of the old castle, situated on an eminence in the valley which follows the course of the West Ockment, on the southern side of the town. This eminence is the termination of a natural ridge, which has been artificially divided below, and raised to a sufficient surface for the requisite buildings and fortifications. The remains of the gateway are still standing, from whence an ascending path reaches the first portion of the ruin, which seems to have consisted of the dwelling and offices, surrounding a court-yard within. The windows of the lower apartments were small apertures, appearing scarcely useful to the purpose for which they were designed. Those of the upper stories are of larger and more convenient size. The Chapel is very distinguishable, with the remains of a basin for the reception of holy water, placed in the wall; but the whole is so greatly dilapidated that no connexion can be traced between the several parts unless by the eye of an experienced antiquary. The mound on which is stationed the keep, is at the further end of the site, having the descent to the moat immediately below it. This tower may have consisted of three or four stories, but only one above the basement is now standing, except in a fragment of wall which seems tottering at every breath of wind. The walls are about six feet thick, in which space there is, on the second story, a small closet or chamber, which looked down the valley. The lower portion of this fortalice was doubtless the prison, and its modes of security seem to indicate a certainty that the inmates were strictly lodged. At present the ivy twines freely over the whole fastness, and although the injuries of time have been, in some degree repaired by the present possessor of the ruin, yet it conveys an impression of its fragility, and probability of speedy dissolution in the winter storms that may roll over it. One circumstance is remarkable, the cement with which the stones are joined is of a tenacity not to be destroyed, and large fragments of the wall, which have fallen to the ground, have all the appearance of solid rocks: in many parts the stones themselves being broken rather than the mortar that connected them in the least disturbed by the fall. There must have been originally a moat surrounding the mound, as the situation is particularly favourable to that purpose.

The market-place of Oakhampton has been recently constructed near the centre of the town, and is much superior to what usually appertains to small country towns. The length of the range supported by granite pillars may be fifty or sixty yards, beside which there is a corn, butter, vegetable, and cattle market in separate divisions. Saturday being market-day, we saw it abundantly thronged, but commodities fetch a high price, when compared with the rate of more frequented districts. We now proceeded to visit Belstone, an adjoining parish to Oakhampton, the church and village of which, about two miles and half distant, is situated on a hill, which intervenes between the course of the Taw and the East Ockment. The church is very poor and uninteresting, with a low thick tower, seeming at least half as broad as it is high. In the church-yard are several tomb-stones of moor-stone, one of which bears the date 1305. Passing the village, we descended a verdant slope towards the Taw, which here pursues a channel completely filled with small rocks, its direction being between Cosson Hill and Belstone Tors. At this time its stream was greatly reduced by the long drought, but when swelled by rains, the rush of water among the rocks must present a grand appearance from the opposite hills. A winding foot-path on the edge of the steep above the river conducted us towards Sticklepath; while every step presented some new prospect of mountain-scenery, varied by the windings of the stream, and the interesting descents of the impending ridges above its channel. The village of Sticklepath is situated on the Exeter road to Oakhampton. It has a small Woollen manufactory, for which a stream of water is brought from the Taw. The great hill of Cosson, rising behind the valley, is remarkable as being the highest point in the Dartmoor chain, and appears eminently conspicuous from all the surrounding country. It is merely an extensive table land, without any piles of rocks to distinguish it with the appellation of a Tor. We reached Oakhampton about five o'clock, having in our excursions of this day, walked about sixteen or seventeen miles.

SUNDAY, 23rd May. Before breakfast took a walk through the grounds which adjoin Mr. Saville's mansion of Oaklands,

lately erected at a considerable expence. The house itself is large and handsome, with a pediment supported by Ionic pillars. The capitals are of a different coloured stone from the columns, which render the appearance somewhat irregular. Below the lawn the East and West Ockment unite their waters and form a considerable stream, which finally terminates in the Torridge about five miles from this spot.

Our second promenade this day was in Oakhampton Park, an extensive track of hill immediately opposite the castle, of which it was anciently an appendage. Its circumference may be about six miles, and the boundaries are principally formed by the East and West Ockments, and Holestock lake, a brook running into the East Ockment. The sides of this fine park were, a few years since, entirely clothed with large timber trees, which have recently been taken down by the lessee of the ground; and in consequence of disputes between the lessee and the proprietor, the whole lies waste and neglected.

The remaining trees are chiefly hollies and young oaks; among them, however, is a very old one of singular growth, called by popular tradition, Lady Howard's Oak, from a current superstition which relates the nightly visits of her ghost to the tree in question. The hollies are of extraordinary dimensions, some of them having attained to three feet diameter, and we saw several that might be half that size, or even more. These are all much dilapidated and injured, by the poorer class of people having taken licence to obtain from them whatever pieces of such timber they may require for any domestic purpose; by which means the trees exhibit marks of the worst usage, being hacked and chopped out of all form and foliage, by the numerous applications of the axe. A road crosses the park from Oakhampton to Moldon lime quarry; but our present path lay along the banks of the West Ockment, through much agreeable scenery, the hill rising, in many places, abruptly from the margin of the river, and yet retaining the ornament of some few trees, forms a striking object in the prospect. The remains of some old buildings in the park are situated to command a view of the castle and also of the principal hills and

tors in the nighbourhood, thus affording the possibility of communication by means of signal, probably balefires, on the least intimation from either point that any subject of importance claimed attention.

In the evening we visited a chapel belonging to the dissenting Calvinistic persuasion.—A gentleman of the neighbourhood is the minister. This place of worship was erected in the year 1822, and has a very neat exterior appearance. No other congregation of dissenters have any chapels in this town.

MONDAY, 24th May. Having yesterday planned an excursion to Craumere, we arose this morning at five o'clock, intending to depart early on our journey into the mountains; but a series of very heavy thunder showers delayed us until nine o'clock, at which hour we set out in the Belstone direction, intending to examine a circle of upright stones, situated near Belstone Tor; and as the weather became favorable, it was determined to push on for Craumere. The circle called Nine Stones, really consists of seventeen stones; its diameter is twenty-one feet, and the situation a short distance N. W. of the Belstone Tor, on the declivity of the hill. We then followed a direction due south, leaving the Belstone Tors also on the left, and passing the head of the Combe and Ock Tor on the left, our way lay over an extensive hill, which brought us within sight of the Taw, the course of which we pursued to its head, a place singularly situated from the extent of bog which has slipped off or sunk away from the side of the hill whence the river flows. Passing Taw-head on the left, we ascended the hills in search of Craumere, but came to a morass of great extent and very remarkable appearance, the ground having in one part slid off for the space of two acres or more to a depth of full ten feet. Further up the valley, this fen or bog occupies a tract upwards of a mile in length, the whole being full of springs, which on the western side unite to a regular stream, forming the source of the East Dart, which proceeds down the valley, augmenting considerably as it drains the hill on the west side, which is one immense peat-bog, broken into small banks or hillocks, the intervals being entirely occupied with a swamp of black peat. These

several morasses are indeed worthy of inspection, being the origin of numerous brooks and rivers, although little known or visited by the explorers of Dartmoor wonders. After fruitlessly seeking the Mere on either of the hills adjacent to this valley of bogs, we turned our face again toward the north, almost in despair of discovering the miraculous pool, but Fur Tor lifting itself to sight, it was judged that we had, in our approach, deviated from the direct route too much eastward, thus reaching the Taw-head, and leaving Craumere, at least, a mile to the right. At length, quite suddenly, the object of our search made its appearance, and certainly disappointed all our party, by its insignificant dimensions, and the total absence of any kind of sublimity or mountain wildness in the adjacent portion of the hills. The extent of the pool, when full, may be rather above an acre. At present, perhaps, it is a slow as it is ever known to be; but in no case, can it be held entitled to the attention which it usually attracts from those whose object it is to penetrate into the wild scenes and abundant curiosities of these uncultured regions. Returning through an extensive declivity, above the source of the East Ockment, a large track of vale is presented to the eye, where the labors of former searchers for tin have been carried on to an extraordinary extent. All this hill-side and valley are likewise covered with an amazing growth of Whortleberry plants, which even supersede the grass, moss and heath, that in other places are the prevalent clothing of the hills, &c. in these parts. Standing above this descent we perceived a rainbow, or rather, what might be more properly designated a *mistbow*, extended on the ground, on the side of the opposite acclivities. This was caused by our great elevation, commanding a view of the cloud resting upon the distant hills, at the time, when a ray of sunshine happened to illuminate its moisture with the hues of an iris. Our return to Oakhamption was by the nearest route, immediately over the side of Row Tor, and thence across Black Down into the park. This home-ward direction in which we journeyed, being the nearest, and indeed the straight track from Oakhampton to Craumere.

TUESDAY, 25th May. Visited the interior of the parish church, which exhibits the show only of modern decoration, with very little admixture of ancient style, either in the building or its adjuncts. The windows, as was before mentioned, are of indifferent taste; the pews belonging to the wealthier visitants are carved and varnished, with purple linings; but throughout all there is no appearance of elegance that can atone for the want of antique adornment suitable to the usual cast of ecclesiastical building. The weather proving very rainy, we were for some hours debarred our accustomed excursion, but clearing about noon, we strolled forth into the wood adjacent to Oaklands, Mr. Saville's new mansion. The beauty of the foliage having been greatly improved by the recent showers, our walk afforded many pleasant scenes and striking prospects; but the trees being all young, the character of the wood-scenery in this neighbourhood is by no means so interesting as under other circumstances it might have been.

WEDNESDAY, 26th May. Heavy showers continuing to fall during the morning, again retarded our walk; at length we chose a favorable interval to renew our search after the sublime and beautiful in the valley of the East Ockment, between the Belstone-side and Holestock Wood. This river presents a succession of wildly magnificent scenery not surpassed by any that we have hitherto witnessed. The stream itself must when swelled by floods be of formidable magnitude, and even now it possessed an impetuosity and force, capable of producing the most impressive effect. A continuation of lesser cataracts rush through the rocks that fill its bed, many of them broken into little falls that take different channels and dash against each other and among the rocks, with an unceasing gush of foam that whitens the flood as it proceeds under the branches of Holestock and the adjoining wood towards its destination. In one place the fall is about twelve feet, the water rushing down the face of a rock so hard that the edges of its rugged fractures have not yielded to the violence or wear of the current. A second fall of about six feet immediately succeeds. Just above this is another scene of equal interest, where the river divides itself into a number of little cataracts that are dashed upon the

beds of rocks, and rolled over steep ledges and stones of large size that intercept their course with a useless barrier. Nothing found upon the Dartmoor streams is superior to this grand line of scenery on the East Ockment. The character of the whole prospect likewise so frequently changes on the eye as to surprize by its variety, as well as deeply to occupy and interest the mind by its sublimity. The objects presented during this morning's excursion, are of a nature to indelibly impress their recollection on the admirer of nature; and leaving a lively picture of their grandeur and beauty, enable the mind to survey anew the majesty of these scenes, which, it is possible, may be beheld by the eye no more.

This afternoon we were invited to pay a visit to the town-hall of this antique and *important* borough, and on the principle of seeing all we could, we proceeded accordingly to inspect the old and commodious mansion, recently besstowed on the town by Mr. Saville, as a possession forever, wherein to transact municipal affairs, and deposit the valuables belonging to the corporation. The hall itself is a large light room, having ten windows of good size, four different apartments, two on each story, being thrown together to form this one. As the Mayor himself was present, we had an opportunity of seeing the Charters of the borough, granted in the reigns of James I. and Charles II. which said important documents are kept duly secured in an iron chest, the locks and fastenings of which seemed almost to defy the ingenuity or skill of the initiated themselves to open. In another ponderous chest are retained sundry documents and grants, dated in various reigns, but the most ancient we saw was one of the time of Henry VI., also another of Edward IV., many of the reigns of Henry VIII. and Elizabeth. These latter remarkable for the bold and legible hand in which they were written, and also for the unchanged blackness of the ink, a circumstance not generally observable, as many of much more recent date are rendered nearly illegible by the altered state of the writing through the effects of time.

THURSDAY, May 27th. Unfavourable as was the aspect of the weather, our desire to visit the scenery on the West Ockment in the vicinity of Blackator and Blackator copse, induced

us to despise all the chances of interruption from the elements; and accordingly we set out, going through the park in a S. W. direction, and taking the rout towards Eastor or Yestor, the most considerable hill in the neighbourhood of Oakhampton, and indeed, from its height and magnitude entitled to a principal place among the Dartmoor tors. The ascent, especially on approaching the summit, is very steep, huge blocks of stone lying scattered around in precipitous confusion, and scarce affording an unoccupied interval. While nearing the peak of the hill, the clouds suddenly collapsed ,and resting on the Tor in a dense mass, the shower began to roll upon us with great impetuosity. During the first violence of the rain we found an imperfect shelter beneath the vast pile of rocks which crown the summit. The mist or cloud that enveloped us preventing any prospect of the surrounding country, which is in clear weather very extensive from this Tor.

Deeming it hazardous to proceed further upon the hills, in a state of atmosphere so uncertain, we abandoned our intention of visiting great Kneeset, about four miles from hence to the south-eastward, and confined our excursion to Blackator, and the valley below it which forms the channel of the West Ockment. In descending the river side of this range of tors, we beheld a scene of the most magnificent character, when at the clearing of the showers, the clouds had collected on the ridge of the opposite steeps, rolling in gigantic columns of vapour, that seemed to station themselves successively on the very brow of the rugged hills over which they hung. A gleam of sunshine breaking through these vast mist-wreaths, they were suddenly clothed with a splendour of hue, and a diversity of light and shade, that rendered the whole prospect one of indescribable beauty and grandeur, the spirits of the storms unveiled their mighty forms, and arrested the eye with an impression so powerful and so poetical, that no words can do it sufficient justice. We thought the encountering even of a tempest to behold this scene, would have cheaply bought the pleasure of that sublime recollection which it left behind.

The ground from Eastor to Blackator is a peat-bog, whence most probably the name of this latter hill. The descent

to the river is very steep, and entirely covered with blocks of stone, similar to those which strew the sides of Eastor. Among these stones, and growing in their very crevices, are many Mountain-ashes or Rowan-trees, some of them old and moss-grown. All along the side of the hill overlooking the course of the West Ockment, is a growth of dwarf-oak, mostly quite young, and now appearing in the red leaf, common to such bushes. This place, which is known by the name of Blackator Copse, bears the strongest resemblance to Wistman's Wood, near Two-bridges, in every particular, except that the trees are of much more recent date than those in the valley of the Dart, the antiquity of which gives rise to so many varying conjectures. Blackator Copse is certainly a remarkable place, and well deserving a visit from the explorers of the Moorland districts, both on account of the singular disposition of the bushes and trees, which extend over a space of, perhaps, upwards of ten acres; and also for the sake of several grand views on the West Ockment, especially where it contracts its course between the descent of two craggy hills, and rushes among the stones below with great violence. In general, however, the stream of the West Ockment is not particularly distinguished for the magnificence of water-scenery, its fall being far more gradual than that of the East Ockment, the views on which are really of a sublime description. Our return to Oakhampton was round the side of a brown, heathy hill, leading by a rough path to the Meldon lime quarry, and thence into the park through the furthermost or south-western extremity, which gave us the opportunity of crossing it entirely in its greatest length, towards the town. This day finished our perambulations in the neighbourhood of Oakhampton, the state of the weather preventing our visit to Belstone Cleaves, near Belstone, the only place any way noted for grandeur of scenery, which we have left unbeheld. The prospects in this vicinity are usually of a highly interesting description; the cultured and enclosed country being bounded by hills unsurpassed in their wild and craggy aspect, and displaying the rude sublimity of their numerous peaks, in fine contrast with the precipitous woods which clothe their base, and overhang the currents of the various brooks and streams intersecting the dells beneath.

The town of Oakhampton is an old and poor place, containing very few houses of a superior description, or having the aspect either of ancient stability or modern elegance. Many others are in an extremely dilapidated condition, and bear the appearance of poverty and neglect. Two bridges cross the two Ockments at different parts of the town, called the East and West Bridge, but neither their construction, nor the view of the rivers, as there seen, possess any thing to excite notice.

About the middle of the town is an old chapel, belonging to the corporation, in a very ruinous state, except the tower, which is firm and well built. An old house standing against the side of the chapel almost conceals it from view. The interior has a carved oak skreen, oak sittings, and a painted pulpit. The date of its erection we did not learn.

FRIDAY, 28th May. Having appointed to-day for our return to Dartmoor, (say the neighbourhood of the Prisons) we arose early, and after breakfasting, set out at eight o'clock on our walk across the moor, in a direction due south, passing Row Tor, West-mill Tor, and East Tor, all on the right, and Ock Tor and Dinger Tor on the left, we crossed Blackfen Brook, a head branch of the East Ockment, on a rude bridge, and ascended that extensive range of table-land, denominated Ockment Hill. The West Ockment, not far from its source, next intercepted our path, and we saw great Kneeset immediately on our right. This spot, a small hill or mound with a tor on the top, is noted for the wildness of its mountain-scenery, being singularly placed in a valley of great extent; immense ranges of hills running N. E. and N. and S. on each side, while Dingertor and Blackator form the northern boundry, the valley opening in a northwest direction towards the cultivated country, covered with the lazy hues of distance. The ground in this vicinity exhibits an extraordinary variety of aspect and growth. Some declivities are wholly covered with grass, affording good pasturage for sheep, while the opposite hill may be an entire peat-bog, or else shagged with heath and rushes, having swampy intervals of bog moss. The appearance is frequently as if the peat-bog, loosening and then detaching itself from the slopes of the hill, had been succeeded by a thin grassy soil. In

one place, on a hill ascending from the head branch of the West Ockment, this effect seemed especially apparent.

Leaving Great Kneeset to the right, we passed the western side of Craumere hill, certainly not more than a mile distant from the pool itself, and crossing Amicombe Brook, and Little Kneeset, a small ascent surrounded by hills, something similar to the place before mentioned of the same name. Furtor ascended immediately before us. A smaller brook, called Furtor-lake, divided its foot from little Kneeset. The acclivity of this hill is very steep and somewhat rugged. The Tor itself is placed in a commanding position, the site being very central, and no other hill rising in the immediate vicinity, it towers alone, amidst a wide extent of moors, and overlooks the circling Tors of the horizon with a sortof lonely pre-eminence that renders it remarkable. To the north-west rose Great Lynch or Lintstor, Chattor, Sharptor, &c.; west appeared, Stanton Hill; while Crockstor, Whitetor, Roulstor, Stapletor, Pewtor, Mistor, Kingtor, and Histworthytor occupied the south and south-west portion of the prospect. On a huge pile of rocks, commanding the height of Furtor, are three rock basins, the innermost one of very perfect form, rather oval, about two feet in its longest diameter, and nine inches deep; the others are of a lesser size, and placed nearer to the verge of the rock, the edge of the outer one being worn or broken away so as to render it imperfect.

From Furtor, a considerable extent of boggy ground extends to the head branch of the Tavy, which we crossed in a narrow valley, and took a direction diverging a very little east of the south, which brought us over a marshy track of peat-bog, passing Greenball, and a head branch of the Cowsic to Holming-beam, from whence the Prisons and Prince-town lay immediately before us, and we concluded our ten days excursion; having obtained from the various objects of our tour a very considerable degree of satisfaction, and treasured up many recollections of beauty and grandeur, such as can only be derived from the observance of nature in her most sequestered recesses;—those haunts where the forms of art have not yet been intruded, and where man comes only as a visiter, to wonder, to admire, and, if his own perversity withstands not, to be instructed and rendered happier.

THE

FOLLOWING STANZAS

WERE WRITTEN

On the occasion of a visit to the grand Scenery, on the

EAST OCKMENT,

ABOUT THREE OR FOUR MILES FROM OAKHAMPTON.

WHERE from his steep recesses Ockment pours
A headlong torrent foaming through the dell,
Each little brook with answering clamour roars,
And the wild gales in leafy chorus swell.

Starting in hoary gush his waters roll
Their battling strength, and with the crags contend;
'Till gentler scenes his turbulence controll,
And the green branches o'er his bosom bend.

A voice of waves comes swelling up the glen,
Where torn mid rocky chinks the cataracts play;
Now heard like heaven's own thunderings, and then
On the gale's softest murmur soothed away.

And doth not some lone Genius of the spot,
With mystic power, thine eye and heart compel?
Bidding thee seek his wave-surrounded grot,
And in his own romantic regions dwell?

Yes! every life-chord thrilling to his touch,
Owns awful nature's unresisted power;
So full the pulse of ecstacy, and such
The glorious forms of her exalting hour.

But ye, insensate—ye, who will not feel
How these wild forms the answering bosom move;
Say, doth not every tone its spells reveal,
And the cold heart of apathy reprove?

Oh! scenes sublime!—oh! wilderness, wherein
Rest thoughts and teachings of immortal lore,
Still your wild haunts some raptured breast shall win,
A place of joy and knowledge evermore!

A place of might and majesty apart,
Where the great forms alone of nature sway;
Leaving their pure impression on the heart,
While life's wild, weakly passions die away.

And happier as wiser we become;
Calmer and gentler, as we feel more free;
Till ev'ry worldly tempter, blind and dumb,
Leaves nature's student—nature!—all to thee!

25th May, 1830. S. D.

ERRATUM.

Page 8, eighth line from the bottom—for, the boar's head, *read*, the boars' heads.

Williams, Printer, Old-Town, Plymouth.

A

JOURNAL

OF

EIGHTEEN DAYS EXCURSION

ON THE

EASTERN AND SOUTHERN BORDERS

OF

DARTMOOR,

AND ON THE

WESTERN VICINITY OF EXMOOR;

INCLUDING

ILFRACOMBE, LYNTON, &c.

—o—

BY MISS DIXON,

Author of "CASTALIAN HOURS," &c. &c.

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A JOURNAL,

&c., &c.

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JULY 7th, 1830. The aspect of the morning being very unfavourable, we were detained about an hour from commencing our intended excursion to explore the neighbourhood of Chagford, Drewsteignton, &c. The mists and rain at length affording an interval, we set forth at quarter before six o'clock. The weather, however, continuing very dubious until our arrival at Post Bridge at half-past seven, when a heavy shower induced us to take shelter in the Greyhound Inn, where we ordered breakfast, and were necessitated by the state of the weather to remain until nine o'clock.

The direction of our journey lying across the Moor to Chagford, we proceeded due north towards Fernworthy. About midway between which and Post Bridge are various remains of Celtic Antiquities, especially a portion of an avenue, and some fragments of a cairn; also, hut circles, trackways, &c. This part of the moor presents a wild and lonely character; the hills frequently declining into abrupt dells, and intersecting each other at foot in the manner particularly observable along the borders of streams, and extent of long and narrow vallies. The herds placed here for summer pasture gathered about us, apparently in vast surprise at so unwonted an intrusion on their domain—and then bounding off, seemed to exult with all the native pride of freedom in the unrestricted range of the solitudes. As we passed, the curlews sprung up from every marshy hollow, and in one place, two were discovered leading their unfledged young through the long rushy grass. On pursuing them, the old birds rose on the wing, leaving their nestlings at our mercy. These were easily taken—but after due examination, restored to their native haunts, where the peculiar cry of the parents was soon heard recalling them to their wonted protection. At some distance below Fernworthy the infant waters of the South Teign are seen winding their course along Assacombe, until very

near the house they join another brook of equal size coming from Sittaford Hill—the two then forming a stream as large as the Swancum where it joins the Dart near Sherberton.—Its future course is in an easterly direction until it joins the North Teign just below Gidleigh, two miles from Chagford. Fernworthy most probably derives its name from the abundance of *ferns* which grow on the hills and slopes in its vicinity—indicating a deep and good soil, which is confirmed by the growth of some large thriving forest trees around the house. The estate belongs at present to Sir H. P. Davie—but during what period it has been in possession of that family we did not learn. A very small part of the old house remains attached to the modern addition, and the date, 1690, appears over the antique door-way surmounted by the initials I. L. I., but without any armorial insignia or other device. The situation is in the heart of the hills—a range of tors and high lands appearing to the N. N.E. and N.W. among which Kestor and Thornwothy Tor are pre-eminent. Many Druidical reliques exist in the neighbourhood, but we did not now delay to examine them. A route of four miles conducted us to Chagford through a country of peculiarly diversified aspect—cultured fields and corn-lands being continually interspersed with patches of rough rocky moorland, while the eye wandered with delight from hill to valley, charmed with the variety of its objects.—To the N.E. appeared Cosson Hill heaving its huge semi-circle in the back-ground, and attracting the clouds until they rolled down their showers on the country beneath, scattering over our brows rather more of the sprinkling of "Nature's baptism" than we at this time by any means desired.—This hill, noted as the loftiest ground in the Dartmoor range, as seen from this part, has a very bold and grand character—tinged with the sombre hue of distance or haze of the descending mists, as they loitered over its waste and unvaried bosom.

Arriving at Chagford, we found a neat and rather cleanly looking country town, the houses being mostly thatched and whitened. A considerable woollen factory gives employment to most of the inhabitants.—Having obtained permission from the proprietor, we visited it, situated about half a mile from the town, and were much gratified by inspecting the ingenious process of the manufacture

from the original state of the fleece to the finest worsted and yarn.—The neighbourhood of the Teign affords an ample supply of water for all the requisite purposes, and the buildings used for the concern appear to be extensive.

The church is a fine erection for a country parish—the porch is distinguishable for a handsome groined ceiling; within, the nave is divided from the aisles by fine Gothic arches, which have, however, been barbarously disguised by the whitewash brush; the original being entirely coated over, and its light and elegant appearance altogether destroyed, The eastern end is adorned with a large and handsome window which displays all the taste and stability of the former and better days of architecture, when those who wrought, whether in wood or stone, looked forward to future times. The other windows have nearly all been modernized—wooden mullions being substituted for stone with very indifferent effect. An ancient monument carved in stone, stands on the right of the communion table. It is to the Whiddon family, whose arms and quarterings are painted on the same;—the date of erection is 1575. One other, an old mural tablet to the Prouses in the seventeenth century, completes our mention of the sepulchral reliques, as the church exhibits nothing further of this description.

Two miles from Chagford we came upon Whiddon Park, in which is situated an ancient mansion, once belonging to the family of Whiddon, but now transferred to other possessors, and much gone to decay. The park occupies a steep declivity towards the Teign, which here flows through a ravine formed by abrupt hills and precipices, which, on the one side, are clothed with ferns and herbage, and on the other, shagged with heath, or protruding, bare and rugged rocks in wild masses and peaks, displaying the commencement of that fine and bold scenery for which this river is so remarkable. Returning through the wood near the river's edge, we passed the Logan-stone, situated in the bed of the stream, but really not appearing as if art had been used to effect its present position—it rocks very slightly, and we were informed that the influence of heavy floods is observable in the change of its situation, as it may sometimes be found much more moveable than at

others. Having, like adventurous discoverers as we are, explored our way over the very high park wall, we retraced our steps, and again passed some fine old pine trees which decorate this spot. Their age we could not precisely ascertain, but heard that it is more than a century—a date which their venerable aspect and time-worn branches fully establishes.

Proceeding across some fields to a new bridge over the Teign, we there diverged toward Drewsteington, where it was our intent to remain for the night. The pathway lies through a pleasant district; openings in the enclosures frequently affording glimpses of the grand prospects on the borders of the Teign, and adjacent heights, the hills intercepting their respective lines of descent, and breaking through the course of the valley so as to form many scenes of great beauty and magnificence.

We reached the village of Drewsteignton at 5 o'clock—after a walk of eleven hours, during which we had accomplished nearly thirty miles—through a track of country of the most diversified character possible—from the rugged and barren hills of Dartmoor to parts distinguishable for the softening aspect of fertility and cultivation.

After taking tea, we visited the church, which appears an ancient erection, much in the same style as that at Chagford, though not so large or handsome. Over the altar is a modern window of painted glass by Muss, representing the figure of Christ; the colours are very brilliant, but the whole seems rather misplaced in a plain and old structure, where nothing else can be found to harmonize with the shewy presence of this piece of modern splendour, which was placed there in the year 1823, at a cost of £190, as we were told: the Rev. E. Treverron, the rector, having subscribed £100, and the parish the rest.

The other windows are Gothic, with stone mullions, &c., except two, which have been destroyed in order to form them into casements for the admission of air; but surely this appears hardly an adequate excuse for thus barbarously removing even the least remnant of an antiquity so interesting as that presented by a Gothic window; and the effect when these are viewed in contrast with the others in the church is far from happy.—The only monument is a

mural tablet of modern date, erected to William Ponsford of Drewston and his wife. On the wall also, appears an inscribed board, detailing sundry charitable bequests which have from time to time been made to the parish—the principal of these was by Richard Edgcumbe, Esq., of certain lands and tenements situated at Venton in the manor of Rushford, and also in the town of Drewsteington—for the repair of the parish church and relief of the poor: the date of this bequest is 1541. We had afterwards an opportunity of seeing the original documents, and also a translation of the old deed, which bears the signature of Richard Eggecomb the donor, in bold hand writing. The preamble sets forth that he was son and heir of Sir Peter Eggecomb, Knt.—and the date of the instrument is the 12th of November, in the 33rd of Henry VIII. Another yet older deed dated in the reign of Henry V, makes frequent mention of John Eggecomb and Thomas Eggecomb; but no translation occurring, and the antique letters being rather unintelligible to us, we had no opportunity of ascertaining the import of this document.

THURSDAY, July 8th. Having marked out rather an extensive plan for this day's operations, we arose at half past five o'clock, but were detained from setting out for nearly an hour by the rain, which fell in heavy showers.—At a quarter past seven, therefore, we took the road to the Cromlech, which is situated on an estate called Shilston, three miles west of Drewsteington.—This monument of antiquity has been so frequently visited and described, that nothing new concerning it can be recorded. The covering stone is sustained by three others in an upright position, but placed at irregular distances one from the other; beneath this upper stone the height is about six feet, to the highest part of the quoit eight feet—it stands in a field, nor is there, as far as we could discover, any other relique of a similar antiquity in the neighbourhood. It is remarkable that these stones are granite, and must have been brought here several miles, no stones of the kind being nearer. Extensive stream-works of a very old date have been excavated in the vicinity, and at a short distance down the valley is Bradford Pool, a piece of water about four acres in extent, formed by an irruption of streams from an old mine, the shaft of which forms the

source of the pool. The situation of this little mere is very romantic, it being completely surrounded by trees which dip their boughs into the water, and quietly stand " with their green faces fined upon the flood—Returning to Drewsteington, we proceeded in the contrary direction to Puddicombe, where we breakfasted at the very pleasant residence of Mr. Ponsford, overlooking the valley or coom, and a fine slope of corn fields on the opposite ridge. This necessary preparation being dispatched, and some inquiries adjusted, we set out to explore the fine scenery on the Teign, where, winding through a series of hills it forms a continuation of bold and magnificent prospects, some of these heights abruptly rising in stern grandeur, covered only with heath, now displaying all the fine hue of its blossom, while others ascend more gradually, clothed with coppice to the summit. A continued declivity brought us to Fingle Bridge, celebrated for the noble views afforded in its vicinity.—Near this spot a winding pathway ascends the opposite hill, from whence we obtained a fine prospect of Preston-bury hill, on the top of which is the site of an old castle or fortification, but of what era nothing led us to determine. Yet further up the ascent is reached an opening, where burst on us the grandest glimpse of scenery we had yet beheld—the descending hills, each varying its form and aspect, interlace at foot so as to include a succession of cooms or glens, winding among them, and disclosing the course of the river Teign which at length breaks forth from between them, and flowing in full sight, adds both beauty and animation to the scene. Nearly a mile further on the very summit of the hill, is Crambrook-Castle, an old fortification named from a litte brook half a mile distant.—This castle as it is termed, is an enclosure of three or four acres, the wall or embankment being composed of small stones, heaped indiscriminately, mixed with earth and overgrown with furze and herbage, Two entrances are still apparent facing each other, and situated so as to avoid the steep declivity—a ditch and mound surround the whole work, which, from its position, must have been exceedingly strong—it bears so striking a resemblance to those circular enclosures on Dartmoor, called *Pounds* that it may perhaps be referred to a period of nearly the same antiquity—as it evidently seems more like a British or Danish than a Roman work, although

many persons have supposed it belongs to the latter denomination. Descending the hill by Crambrook farm, an estate belonging by charitable donation to the poor of Dunsford—we passed another similar circular entrenchment called Wooston Castle, the arrangement of which is much destroyed. A very long declivity through shadowy lanes brought us to Clifford Bridge over the Teign, from which to Dunsford Bridge is a pleasant route by the side of the river; we did not, however, take that direction, but reached Dunsford Bridge by another and more circuitous way. The scenery from this point is very striking where the Teign, considerably enlarged, flows on in a S.E. direction toward Chudleigh. We followed the road to Moreton, ascending a hill which overlooks the fine valley of the Teign with its bordering woods and dells. The hills at every step displaying a variety and beauty not often combined. After passing the village of Doccombe we turned into a succession of lanes leading over the country toward Blackinstone Rock—a very remarkable mass of granite stone piled on the brow of a low hill, N.E. of Hightor. The form of this huge peak is peculiar—a quoit or kind of crowning rock composing the summit, concerning which, a curious tale is related: that King Authur and the king of the infernal regions having a contest—the former took his stand on this spot, and the latter on Heltor, two or three miles distant—and that his satanic majesty, willing to make a display of his powers, flung this quoit from Heltor to its present situation; which act of heroism we may easily suppose deterred even his renowned adversary from any further contest. A short distance from Blackinstone, in a northernly direction, is a rock remarkable for many rock basins, one of very large size being at least 18 inches in depth, but broken off at one end by a fracture of the stone, which has here split or divided, perhaps by some natural fissure, or the effect of the weather. On the opposite stone is a peculiar appearance of lines or ridges running across the face of the rock, somewhat in the form as it were of ribs, with two small rock basins adjoining. We found this rock to have been considerably destroyed by the invasion of the workman's tool, which has already obliterated much of its antiquecharacter, and bids fair to very shortly efface what even yet remains. A walk of two miles brought us to Moreton, where passing

the church, we observed the elegant form and embellishment of its fine Gothic windows—one of which, however, has been defaced by the barbarous destruction of its stone work, and the introudction of a common casement for the purpose of admitting air to the church—a tasteless specimen of folly, of which a similar instance has been already noticed at Drewsteington. We arrived at N. Bovey soon after eight o'clock, having during this day perambulated a country abounding in diversified prospects—from the grand and sublime of the abrupt steeps and intermingled hills, to the softer features of woodland and cultured landscape, making altogether the extent of our walk about twenty four miles.

FRIDAY, JULY 9th. Left N. Bovey at seven o'clock, and pursued a direction bordering on the river Bovey; the pathway lying partly through corn fields and meadows, and partly among the woods, which here begin thickly to crowd the vicinity of the stream. After walking about one mile and a half, we came to Manaton Bridge, a very curious passage over the Bovey—composed principally of natural rocks, the water passing beneath them, divided into several streams by the intervention of the large stones which fill up and obstruct its channel. The site of this bridge adds considerably to its wild appearance: the hills descending precipitously towards it, and the whole closely embowered in trees. At a cottage near by we took breakfast, and then proceeded down the course of the river to Lustleigh Cleaves, celebrated for the fine scenery with which the neighbourhood abounds. The first object of our notice was Horsham Steps, a place singularly curious and interesting. The stream of the Bovey, here rather considerable, loses itself under a mass of loose rocks, heaped or hurled together in its channel, for perhaps a space of one hundred and fifty yards, so as almost completely to conceal the water from view, scarcely any glimpse appearing from beneath the huge masses which seem tumbled from the impending ridge, where all the rocks are of a similar description. Lustleigh Cleaves, a rapid declivity studded with projecting points and masses of rock, rises in precipitate grandeur on the left of the stream. The scenery here assumes an aspect of magnificence, and ascending the side of the eastern ridge, we had the best opportunity for observing the forms and positions of the hills, together with the

character peculiar to each. The acclivities on the opposite side of the river form a sharp ridge, gradually lowering until it declines to a termination about midway of the extensive line of valley, inclosed on the one hand by Barrow Commons, and on the other by Lustleigh Cleaves, and the continuous chain of ridgy hills toward the south. These hills arising each into a little peak, and linked in a successive line through their whole length, exhibiting a striking difference from the scenery which we yesterday contemplated on the borders of the Teign. Barrow Common indeed bears much resemblance to Prestonbury, and forms a fine back ground to the wooded slopes overhanging the Bovey. The copse and woodlands of this vicinity present an appearance of cheerful freshness and beauty which contrasts finely with the more rugged portions of the landscape. Having gained the summit we passed several lanes to a farm or village, called Feather-bridge, from whence the church path descends on the opposite side of the hill towards a gate, where the aspect of the valley of Lustleigh bursts at once to view in a manner unspeakably striking and singular—The rapid declivities of numerous hills and ridges, forming a kind of Alpine dell, in the midst of which stands the church and village, surrounded by meadows and corn fields intersected with trees and hedge rows; the whole picture presenting an appearance so unusually beautiful, that although we had recently been conversant with the finest and wildest scenery which the neighbourhood affords, this view of Lustleigh vale was yet calculated to excite a feeling of pleasure and admiration proportioned to the actual beauty of the scene. Passing down a steep pathway through a cornfield, we presently came to the village itself, where we rested for upwards of an hour, and partook of some fruit from a neighbouring garden. The interior of the church we did not see, but its outward appearance bore no character worthy of note: neither the tower, windows, or entrances being at all distinguishable for architectural or other beauty.

Our next object of exploration being Beckey-fall, we took a route leading directly back over the ridge of hills we had last descended, and reached a farm house, where, it seems, visitors are accustomed to enquire concerning the way to the fall. At this place we could get no information, except that the path was much

too intricate to be found without a guide, and that one should be ready to attend us as soon as he had eaten his dinner. This not by any means suiting our plan, we declined the offer, being rather resolved to explore for ourselves. It may here be observed that residents in the vicinage of any remarkable object or natural curiosity, always exaggerate tremendously the difficulties of approach; and often refuse any sort of information as to the precise situation or means of access to such places, thereby obliging travellers, to whom the districts may be little known, or who proceed without a correct map, to bestow a gratuity for guidance, even where the road is as plain as the way to a parish church.

A very winding footpath through a steep copse brought us to the river Bovey, which is here crossed by an old shattered bridge, shortly after it s junction with the Beckey, at the sudden termination of a sharp and remarkable ridge, which separates the two streams through the whole length of a very extensive valley. The breadth of a small meadow brought us to a road, following which, another little bridge conducted us over the Beckey and into the wood, which partially covers the side of the above-mentioned ridge. The soil of this track of waste seems most excellently adapted to the growth of forest trees; but from what may certainly be deemed a culpable neglect on the part of the proprietor, or his agents, a great portion of it lies almost entirely useless, overgrown with ferns and furze, and suggesting the idea of the owner having a larger possession than he needs, since he can afford to leave a part of it thus unoccupied. Again crossing the stream, our direction was of course upward, and although the waterfall was the chief object of search, yet the Beckey brook affords numerous instances of interesting scenery, its descent being both rapid and rocky. Just below the cataract is a collection of rocks, so exactly, in all respects, similar to Horsham steps, that the description of one may serve for the other. The stream also is in the same manner swallowed up in their interstices, the roar of its several falls coming up through the openings, as through an abyss. Many of these huge rounded stones are so jammed together that they form a mutual support, or natural arch, under which the water finds a ready passage. The scite of this curious assemblage of rocks is, as nearly as we could determine,

opposite to Horsham steps on the other side of the hill, which renders the two instances the more remarkable.

The Beckey fall is over a broken and craggy heap of rocks, which form a barrier across the glen, through which the brook descends—The height taken from the first part of the fall, may be about fifty feet, the water dividing into many streams, and flowing over the jagged faces of rocks, which successive floods have worn into hollows and apertures, that add to the wildness of the scene. Considered in comparison with the Lydford fall, this has all the advantage of wildness and grandeur; the character of the former being too tame and uniform. This, on the occasion of a sudden flood, must present a cataract really magnificent, as the channel of the stream and aspect of its rocks sufficiently prove the frequent descent of a mass of waters far superior to the ordinary dimensions of the brook. At such times, the whole river dashed into foam must come sweeping over the barrier with an impetuosity not equalled by any other stream among those which take their source in the Dartmoor hills, unless it be the East Ockment, formerly described. After as long an examination of the beauty of the spot as our time afforded, we climbed over the ridge of rocks, and continued to follow the Beckey to the upper part of the wood, where it is crossed by a plank which conducted to a pathway through fields and lanes towards Manaton, but this not being our destination, we diverged by another route to the moorlands, immediately above the curious pile of rocks called "Bowerman's Nose" altering our steps in that direction. On this common we passed several hut circles, enclosures and trackways, which we had not time to examine—Also two collections of rocks forming a tor, below which, and on the western side of the hill is situated Bowerman's Nose, composed of several granite rocks laid one upon the other, the uppermost projecting and in such a way as probably to have occasioned the appellation of the whole pile;—seen from the road directly below, this pile exhibits a very striking form, which has led to a supposition of its bearing some marks of art, or vestige of ancient adaptation to druidical purposes, neither of which occur, and perhaps the principal reason of its having attracted notice is from its standing alone and observable—many as remarkable aggregation of rock being to

be found among the tors on the summit of the Dartmoor hills. A walk of three miles brought us to the village of Widdicombe, where we found the accommodation and refreshment needed after a day in perambulations such as ours; our walk having this time extended to about twenty miles. After tea we visited the church, which has a handsome tower, but not much otherwise interesting. The interior is plain, most of the windows being small and unornamented. One of a fine construction at the eastern end, is concealed by a tasteless altar-piece placed against it; as tawdry as paint and gildering can make it, and displaying in two compartments a rather grotesque Moses and Aaron, with sundry other appropriate devices. The stone pillars, and Gothic arches are here as usual bedaubed with whitewash, which takes away much of their effect, presenting only a monotonous aspect, wholly different from what was originally intended, and even the carved stone font has not been excepted from this. Too much cannot be said against those Vandals of ignorant parsons, and churchwardens, who thus lamentably deface the vestiges of former taste, and blunder into a fashion of devastation truly provoking. Of the numerous parish churches we have lately seen, few are without some specimen of this propensity to mar or destroy the elegant old style—and the church at Buckland Monachorum may be cited as the only one that has come within the scope of our inspection, which has escaped the disgrace of whitewashed columns and arches. Widdicombe church is destitute of monumental ornaments. Combined with the boarding of some pews near the pulpit, are the vestiges of a skreen, which seem to have been decorated; but when, or how it has disappeared we could not learn. Outside the gate of the churchyard are the steps of a cross—but a yew tree now flourishes in place of the removed emblem of christian dispensation of peace and good will—of which its ministers in olden times seem to have set up memorials enough, if they, or their successors either, had found the grace to preach, or practice the doctrines of its divine Bestower.

SATURDAY, JULY 10th. Arose at six o'clock, and half an hour after proceeded on our tour. At the extremity of the village of Widdicombe is a well, enclosed by roof and sides of granite stone. This, placed here in those days "when the church was Rome's,"

and Saint-ascendancy was rendered the faith of the multitude. It is dedicated to Saint Pancras—and we were duly apprized that to this day all the baptisms at the church are performed with this "holy water"—a remnant of antique superstition which has been perpetuated through a succession of ages to the present time: so long does such an impression endure, and so firmly rooted are the seeds of pious terrors or deceits, where no hand has been stretched forth to eradicate the hereditary errors of mankind. Of what use, it may be asked, are so many preachers and teachers of religion, if they thus suffer ignorance to exist and flourish under their very hand? and further, would this be so if superstition and error were not necessary to support a system founded on human weakness and degradation? So many churches, and so many beneficed teachers, ought surely to have produced a more salutary effect; or if this be impossible—if "corruption cannot put on incorruption," should it not give place to some more rational and simple means of diffusing that instruction and piety which are so greatly needed? This truth seems so legibly written in a thousand facts that he who runs may read, and yet how little is it promulgated or attended to!

A circuitous and shadowy route through various lanes brought our steps to the church and village of Buckland in the moor, where, at a farm house near the church, we took breakfast. The church itself is a very poor building, inferior to any other we had seen, presenting nothing worthy the least notice; the parish also is small and thinly inhabited. Court, the residence of Mrs. Bastard is here situated, on a pleasant ascent, commanding a view of finely wooded hills and dells of the vicinity. A brook runs through the valley, for which we could obtain no other name than the "Mill-brook" from its having formerly been employed to drive a mill now disused. A mile further took us to Hazel-wood, and after winding through various paths and fields, we again found ourselves tracing the ridge of a hill above the Dart, exactly beneath Hazel Tor, and opposite Holne Chase, which is here descried in its full extent, almost surrounded by the river, and covered with foliage. The prospect from this pathway in Hazel Wood, is exceedingly fine, commanding views of a country both diversified and beautiful, and requiring only the addition of a mountainous back ground to

produce a powerful impression on the beholder. A very long descent, terminating at Holne Bridge, conducted us to the Chase, where we wandered for two hours exploring the intricacies of its recesses. The trees are principally oaks, which exhibit a very flourishing aspect—large hollies are also numerous, but we saw none equal in size to those in Okehampton Park—perhaps from being of later growth. Reaching New-bridge we found ourselves once more in the homeward road, this being the last day of our excursion, and we having arranged to be at the prisons about four o'clock in the afternoon. A very steep road up an abrupt hill, brought us to Pound-gate, from whence the road lies direct to Dartmeet, Two-bridges, and Prince Town; all the scenes and prospects in this route, partake of the mountain character—lofty tors and extensive wastes, are presented to the eye; wildness and grandeur again becomes predominent, and the mind springs back with the native bound of freedom, to the unrestricted regions of contemplation. This, our second tour on the borders of Dartmoor, has not been less a source of pleasure and information than the first. In four days we have traversed a district abounding in objects worthy the most attentive examination, and in our various routes walked at least one hundred miles; and if we have not sufficiently improved all its opportunities, or gained all the knowledge we might; we have at least, the satisfaction to reflect that our best endeavours were not wanting to either.

SATURDAY, JULY 17th, 1830. Proposing to extend our present excursion as far as the northern shore of the county—we left Okehampton at six o' clock this morning, with the intention of walking to Barnstaple, a distance of thirty miles. Two or three miles from Okehampton the country begins to assume a character of abruptness and irregularity—the hills declining suddenly into deep dells, interspersed with trees and corn fields. Behind us arose the last line of the Dartmoor Tors; standing like a barrier between us and the wide extent of moor and summits inclosed beyond them.

The clouds were rolling in dense masses around the peaks of Yes-tor, Row-tor and others in their vicinity, indicating a humidity of atmosphere rather uncongenial to our undertaking.

No object particularly interesting occurred to attract attention between this and Hatherleigh, in the neighbourhood of which the soil becomes poorer, and the country looks less cheerful—without any addition of grandeur.

The town of Hatherleigh is an old and mean place, situated on the two sides of a little valley. The church has a spire; a fashion much observed in these parts. About a mile beyond the town we reached a fine bridge over the Torridge, with three arches, each about thirty feet span. The bed of the stream itself becomes here of considerable breadth, but is destitute of rocks; the banks contribute to that placidity of aspect which the river exhibits in this part of its course, being divided into meadows, and adorned with trees and copses. At some distance from this spot we passed Petrockstow, where is a well of brackish or salt water, mentioned by Risdon; but as this curiosity lay out of our path, we had not time to visit it. Six miles of uninteresting road brought us to great Torrington, a town of about three thousand inhabitants, seated on a steep declivity near the Torridge, from whence its name is derived. A canal forms in part its means of communication to Bideford, to which place also is a road abundant in fine views of the country.

Ascending by an indirect path toward the town, a spire is seen to the right, erected, it seems, by Lord Rolle in honor of the Duke of Wellington soon after the battle of Waterloo. This path arrives at the site of an ancient castle or fortress, which must have been excellently well adapted for defence, the ground falling so abruptly to the river, as almost to preclude surprisal or attack on that side: nothing remains of it but a mound and some faint traces of breast works near by. The town of Torrington has nothing to strike the attention of visitors; its church is at this time under repair, having in progress a new spire, placed as is usual here, on the tower. This style of ecclesiastical structure has by no means so handsome an appearance as the minarets common elsewhere, especially when wanting the guise of antiquity. The road from Torrington to Barnstaple is quite uninteresting, and as far as we could judge from

appearances, not much frequented. Approaching this latter town, the face of the country wears a more flourishing aspect, but the foliage is less brilliant than in the more inland districts, the sea blasts having caused considerable blight.

The town of Barnstaple stands on a plain bordering the estuary of the Taw, which is here a fine and placid river spreading gradually toward the sea, until it is, some miles below, absorbed into the ocean at Barnstaple Bay. The approach to the town on this side is over an ancient and fine bridge of sixteen arches; but as our tour is more for the sake of the beauties of nature than those of art, we leave towns and their perfections or advantages to those better experienced in such descriptions, merely observing that Barnstaple appears a clean and airy place, and the hills arising around it in a semi-circular form, present an agreeable variety of natural scenery. It was nearly dusk when we arrived, our journey having met with much interruption from the rain, which fell during a large part of the afternoon with great violence.

SUNDAY, JULY 18. Our first visit to day was to the church, which, however, possesses little in itself to attract notice: the style of the architecture and windows seems rather modern compared to others which we have lately seen. There are abundance of mural tablets to the memory of various families of the town and neighbourhood—with much of heraldic embellishment, and versified adulation annexed. One of more modest aspect than many others, is erected in memorial of some branches of the Incledon family, whose ancient residence and possessions are in this vicinity. The celebrated singer of the name was one of this family. The organ is stated by Risdon to be the finest in the West of England; but I believe that in the Cathedral of Exeter has been placed there since the time of his writing. This happening to be the first Sunday after the interment of the late King, was, according to custom, a day of "sorrow and affliction of souls"—A large part of the congregation wore the "sable garb," not, we may reasonably suppose "of woe" but rather of fashion. A few paltry knots of crape appended to the lamps, with a black covering to the pulpit and reading desk, expressed the amount of ecclesiastical mourning. The discourse on the occasion, was also, perhaps, "of course," and therefore not worth

much—but yet the subject deserves a moment's consideration; whether this practice of magnifying the virtues, and of varnishing over the faults and crimes of departed monarchs, be not in the end a great injustice to others as well as to themselves. The whole of the hearers know and feel that the preacher's design is to promulgate false representations of a man's character, and to impress a notion that the weaknesses and errors of the great, are game above common reach. An attempt is made to invest the subject of these undeserved praises with a sort of pious awe: the old and it is hoped, for-ever-exploded doctrines of the Divine right of sovereigns, and the sanctity which girds about thrones and sceptres are on these occasions raked up and brought forward like old fragments of corruption from a charnel house, to insult the ears of those who should indeed be "wiser in their generation" than to allow or connive at such delusion. Dead kings with their deeds and characters, belong to history; and if sovereigns were not unfortunately too sure of the flatteries of the servile among mankind, they would perhaps be more studious to deserve the approbation of the good and just.

"Those sole and true legitimates of heaven."

But unhappily the pulpit is not in our times always the source of truth. What monstrous and indefeasible doctrines do we not daily see poured forth by the gospel ministers! How have they not advocated the most perverted opinions: "Malice, hatred, and all uncharitableness" on earth; and made of the Deity a being to be feared and dreaded, rather than loved and sought after! What wonder then if mortal idols are set up; whether of iron or of clay—a golden calf or an absolute king—that pulpit eloquence will be found ready alike in the defence or service of either. Nor does this imputation apply only to the Establishment; dissenting congregations are also under the cloud, and hear their spiritual teachers doling forth lamentations that must be held as hypocritical, since in the very same breath they declare it beneath their "dignity" to say one word about the "private character" of a man, whom yet they affirm to have been "ordained" to his high office by the almighty! Such are the inconsistencies of men who are withheld by any motive from speaking their real sentiments, and honestly declaring to others what they know and are convinced is the truth.

"Away with these, true wisdom's world will be
Within its own creations, or in thine,
Maternal Nature!"

And taking to ourselves this salutary counsel, we directed our steps to Cotton Hill—a remarkably bold and abrupt eminence situated S. E. of the town of Barnstaple, overlooking the course of the Taw and a large extent of the adjacent country. From the summit the prospect is very fine—being extremely varied, and seen as we saw it, under the influence of a serene sky and bright sunshine, presenting a noble and splendid picture. Eight churches are visible, belonging to as many parishes, and eastward lie several ranges of hill; one of them in particular, called the *Ridge*, displays a very singular form—dividing the country into two deep dells, that run in a parrellel direction for a considerable way. To the N. W. is the town of Barnstaple, which, with its bridge, appears from hence in a striking position. The blue expanse of water formed by the embouchure of the Taw lying between the hills with a hue and aspect of the deepest serenity. Tawstock House, the property of Sir B. Wrey, appears among groves and tufts of foliage: it is a large and modern looking building, though said to have been erected in the age of Elizabeth. Tawstock church is situated immediately beneath it, embosomed also in trees. Risdon mentions its containing some fine monuments to the Earls of Bath; but our time did not permit us to visit it. Close on the Banks of the Taw, and at the foot of Cotton or Cadden hill lies Bishops Tauton, so named from having been the earliest episcopal see in this county; but nothing remains to indicate its ever having possessed the least portion of that splendour, now considered a necessary adjunct of mitred dignity. The church is a very indifferent structure, with a spire of stone, and ornamented on the sides with lines of small projection, and two circles about half way up. Both these churches are situated close to the Taw, on opposite banks, and are therefore at the extremities of their respective parishes. Just beyond the village of Bishops Tauton, towards Barnstaple, is a small stream, for which no person of whom we enquired, knew any definite name; a circumstance which occurs to several other brooks in this part of the country. When countries are first populated and while they continue but thinly inhabited, the name of every river and rivulet is of consequence, as where there

are few land-marks, the course of streams becomes the principal guide and boundary through the several districts. Thus, dwellings and villages took their appellations from the waters on which they were situated; and to preserve a knowledge of the identity of a river, it was needful that it should preserve one name from its source to its mouth. At present we find that rivers are become of much less importance; the great roads and their adjuncts answering exactly the same end as that erewhile attained by means of the rivers and brooks: it therefore happens that we frequently find the proper name of a river totally unknown in the districts it flows through or by. In this way the Taw is called the Barnstaple river; the Torridge, the Bideford river, and so on in the same way of others. Tourists should therefore be particular in their enquiry respecting rivers and their appellations; but with all our attention to this point, we very frequently failed to obtain the desired information.

MONDAY, JULY 19th. Having arranged last night to leave Barnstaple early this morning, we departed before breakfast, intending to take that repast at Fremington, in our way to Instow, Appledore, &c. The morning fortunately proving fine, our walk was very pleasant, although much of the way lying through lanes, we were debarred the satisfaction of observing the district through which we passed so much as we wished. Beckington, the first place we came to, is a considerable village in the parish of Fremington, the church town of which is about two miles further on, and is also a large sized place of its kind. Here we took breakfast, and afterwards with some difficulty, by very intricate paths, found our way to Instow—a parish lying close to the Torridge, and nearly opposite Appledore. The church is very poor, and apparently very old. Part of the roof is unplaistered within, the laths and slates remaining in view. Round the pillars, or some of them, is a kind of chapiter of old carving in wood, black through age. The stone threshold at the principal entrance is worn down full six inches by the steps of the churchgoers through a series of generations. Nothing else here is worthy remark, unless it be that the prevalence of the gusts from the sea, has had a manifest effect on the trees and other growth hereabout, all their boughs being driven in a direction contrary to the wind, and even the trunks of several trees are bowed inland. The tide being

out, the passage across the ferry to Appledore proved very difficult, the boat several times grounding on the sand banks, which are very numerous in the two estuaries, and are constantly shifting with the high tides. We at length reached the Appledore side, but did not land, as our intention being to proceed to Ilfracombe, we crossed the pool where the fresh water of the Taw and Torridge meets the tide from different directions, occasioning a line of ripple, which in rough or stormy weather increases so greatly as to render the passage to the Barrow sands quite impracticable. Landing on these sands, our walk extended some distance over a beach which the tide had just quitted—the footing being very unsteady and difficult. The Barrow Sands are of considerable extent, and have been drifted by the winds into huge heaps and ridges, which are overgrown with furze, rushes, &c., and a large variety of marine plants, now flowering in great luxuriance. Following the course of an extensive embankment on which we walked, we arrived at a road diverging to the village of Branton or Braunton, situated on a little brook called by Risdon the Downham. The church also is described by the same author as worthy note, but as we had not time to visit the interior, our observations extend only to its outward appearance: the low tower flanked with buttresses, is surmounted by a steeple covered with lead. In the end over one of the entrances, is a fine Gothic window, of large dimensions in proportion to the building, being separated by stone mullions into seven divisions, and much ornamented and divided above. One of the porches is also of large size, and the walls have many monumental tablets. The emblems relating to St. Branock, mentioned by Risdon as being represented in one of the windows, we did not find, nor indeed could be informed whether they were in carved work or painted glass. The churchyard planted with large trees, has a pleasant and airy appearance.

The distance from Branton to Ilfracombe is about nine miles, by a very hilly and tedious road, affording nothing to excite the curiosity of travellers. West Down, a church village situated about midway of the two towns, was nearly the only place of habitation that met our view. Approaching Ilfracombe we were glad to escape from the regular route, and taking a pathway across some fields, a glimpse of the bold scenery of the neighbourhood burst at once upon us—

the long jagged line of cliffs to the left, with their abrupt summits, and on the right several lofty hills extending in a direction towards Lynton, varied the horison. After crossing two fields, a precipitous glen displayed before us a striking specimen of the natural magnificence of the country—and two lofty eminences, divided by its intervening depth, gave to view the town of Ilfracombe, seated among crags and cliffs at the further end of the valley; half an hour's walk brought us on the spot, where we were glad to find repose, after a journey, which, though in many respects highly pleasant and interesting, was yet rendered somewhat tedious from the great heat of the weather,—the more felt also, as the principal part of our walk lay over shadowless sands, or through narrow lanes, no less annoying to the pedestrian.

TUESDAY, 20th JULY. The state of the weather this morning proved rather unfavourable to our design of visiting the objects of admiration afforded by the neighbouring scenery. Our first walk was to one of the cliffs, where the rocks, craggy and broken by a thousand tempests, lie in dark disparted masses, with waves foaming about them, and as the tide approaches, washing gradually above them. The sea being at this time exceedingly calm, we had not the "dreadful pleasure" of witnessing its commotion on this rugged coast; but imagination may easily picture the effect which a violent gale would produce on this shore, where cliff succeeds to cliff, and jutting points of rock stretch themselves out, as if to invite the dash of the breakers that roar around them.

After breakfast we ascended a lofty hill to the right of the town, called Helesborough. From its summit is a fine view of the cliffs and sea, with the town on the one side, and the deep dell and village of Hele on the other. Around this hill are several circular courses of embankment or breast work, similar to what we had before seen at Lydford and Brentor. These entrenchments are very traceable on one side of the ascent, running together and meeting at a point of the cliff where, overhanging the sea, it was naturally strengthened against attack. The Danes having much infested this district, it is probable that these are the remains of some fortified position which they had here formed; especially as the numerous coves and nooks among the cliffs favoured their unobserved landing to surprise and ravage the country.

From this eminence, we proceeded to the Lantern-hill; so named from a small building on its summit, where is a light for the direction of mariners, regularly from Michælmas to Lady-day—the interior is fitted up for a reading-room, and two newspapers are taken in for subscribers. We heard that it had in old times been a chapel, but no positive information on this point could be obtained of our informants.

WEDNESDAY, 21st JULY. At six o'clock this morning we set forth to take a full range of the cliffs, and survey the crags and sea under the brightening influence of a clear sky and morning sun. Ascending the first hill, we came to a new walk lately formed, and winding with many turns along the side of the cliff next the sea, so as to command a full prospect of the expanse of waters reaching directly across to the Welch coast, which was now very visible; and would have been yet more distinctly so, had the atmosphere been perfectly clear. At intervels, along the course of this pathway, are seats cut out of the rock, or placed for the accommodation of promenaders. This walk is certainly a very agreeable place of recreation for the inhabitants and visitors of the place; and the proprietor of the ground is entitled to much commendation for having permitted it to be formed—a notice being placed to apprize the public that they enjoy this convenience merely by sufference, and therefore, to request that no trespass may take place over the fences &c. A request, which, it is to be hoped may meet with attention, as such instances of a consideration for the public but seldom occur, and are valuable in proportion to the degree of pleasure conferred. Our next direction was along the cliffs north-easterly towards Watermouth, the property of Mr. Davie Basset. Here a small stream having no other appellation than "the water" winds through a deep vale, and forming a little estuary, meets the tide just below the mansion, which is seated on a slight rise of ground, apparently formed by art from the side of the hill. This mansion is built in an elegant castellated style, and a very extensive plan, but remains at present in so unfinished a state as to convey but little idea of the effect, were it completed. The entrance is by a fine Gothic archway, to which form the windows correspond, and a terrace is raised round the building, enclosed by a low parapet wall. The plantations com-

prehend a large part of the two declivities of the valley, but cannot be termed flourishing, as the sea blasts have proved very inimical to the young trees, especially at the mouth of the dell, where it opens upon the cliffs and tide. Higher up towards the village of Berry Narbor, the growth is more luxuriant; the situation being sheltered considerably by the surrounding elevated ground, which affords many pleasant walks and prospects, while the church tower is seen above the trees in the venerable guise of years, a striking object to the view in this direction. In the church-yard are two very ancient Yews, that have outlived many generations of those who now tenant the narrow cells below. The church itself exhibits nothing remarkable, and the village is a dirty place, though the houses are rather better than those usually found in such sequestered situations. Returning to Mr. Basset's grounds we next sought the cliff scenery—so worthy of admiration and so calculated to impress the mind with its bold and stern magnificence. These crags rise from the water in many places with a perpendicular ascent, forming precipices of the wildest character. Around their base, ragged points of rock lift themselves from amid the waves, encircled by a continual foam-wreath, marking the dash of the waves as they are impelled by the tide or winds, upon these craggy barriers. Looking south-eastward the scene is extremely fine; the cliffs gather on each other, darkening above the sea, which winds its shining billows among the rugged rocks that seem torn off and scattered by a hundred storms. The aspect of all these cliffs, exhibits strong indication of these inroads which the sea from time to time must be making on this coast. The bases of the rocks worked by the action of the water into hollows and recesses forming an unstable foundation to the ponderous crags above, while in many places huge masses have been undermined and lie overthrown beneath their original elevation, leaving wide seams and fissures in the hill, from the summit down to the water. These indentures form numerous little coves and creeks, into some of which descend the streams and brooks of the neighbouring eminences. At the head of one extensive cove appears the large village of Combe-Martin, which the adjacent staking and nets indicated to be the abode of fishermen. Behind appeared some cultivated fields, but the chief character of the scene is that of grand and stormy magni-

ance, of any we had seen—poverty and dirt seeming the characteristics both of the place and its dwellers. It was originally populated by miners, sent there in the reign of Edward the third, to work the mines of tin and silver then existing in the vicinity, and of which numerous traces still appear. The church is superior in its style to those of the neighbouring parishes, having a lofty and well-built tower, a carved skreen, and sundry monuments, but our time would not permit further examination.

Returning along the cliff, we had ample opportunity to regard the fine scenery which strikes the beholder at every point of view; but as this prospect has been principally described before, a repetition is unnecessary, though tempting in the extreme. We again reached Ilfracombe late in the afternoon, and as our plan is to leave it early to-morrow morning, I shall here make such mention of it as our observations will admit of.

The town is situated on a rising ground, or rather the side of a little hill at the termination of the combe: a brook of two branches passes by it, and meets the tide immediately below, but as usual, it has retained no distinctive appellation; at least, that we could hear of. The houses are mostly of modern erection, being designed chiefly for the accommodation of visitors during the summer months, but at present they were mostly untenanted by the usual fashionable guests, the unfavourable state of the season having deterred them from choosing their summer residence in a place which fine weather only can render attractive. The church may be termed large for a town of the size of Ilfracombe, and consists of three aisles, under as many separate roofs, with a tower midway of the northern side. The walls within are clothed with tablets in memorial of various families of the neighbourhood. A rather handsome one in the S. E. corner is inscribed thus:

"Interred near this spot lies the body of Mrs. Killiowe, wife of Nicholas Killiowe, of Landlake, in the County of Cornwall, Esq., who died the 18th of February, 1686." The armorial distinctions belonging to the family are also displayed on the tablet.

Near the above is another, to the memory of Thomas Bruton, of Langleigh, date 1709, with his arms. Within the chancel are many to the Cutcliffe family; also a stone in the pavement thus inscribed: "Hic jacent corpora Caroli et Gratiæ Cutcliffe equitem monumento

prædict, Anno 1637. Several also are placed in memory of the family of Vye. One to the Parminters, of Watermouth and Whiteford, bearing for its earliest date 1677. A slab of white marble decorated with naval emblems, records the death of Capt. Bowen, who was killed in the attack at Teneriffe, under Lord Nelson, (then Sir Horatio) in the year . The architecture of this church possesses nothing remarkable. At the termination of each band or arch of the tracery over the nave or middle aisle, is a grotesque figure representing a beast, angel, or human form, intermixed without order. An instance of a similar style of embellishment exists in the church of Buckland Monachorum, but we have not noticed it elsewhere. The pulpit is carved, but the workmanship seems modern, having nothing like the relief of the old carving. No other object worthy notice occurs in this church.

In the town is a National School, supported by voluntary contributions; but I believe no charitable endowments. In the year 1801 the population was 1800, perhaps it may now be nearly 2000:

SATURDAY, 23rd. At half-past seven o'clock we left Ilfracombe, and crossing through Watermouth grounds took the footpath to Combe-Martin. Having described this place in my yesterday's page, there only remains to say that we passed hastily through it, and pursued the route towards Lynton. The lanes which led us thither were sufficiently disagreeable, not affording any glimpse of the country until we had ascended a long hill about two miles from Combe Martin, from whence the eye ranged over a fine and varied prospect following the course of the Umber brook, including part of the parishes of East-Down, Berry-Narbor, Combe-Martin, &c. A cliff to the right of this latter village, called Hangmans Hill, appearing a very bold and prominent object.

Four miles further brought within view a striking specimen of the scenery we were now approaching. Panacombe, running between several ridges, affords a channel to the brook called Eden, which meets the sea at Eden-mouth not far distant—joining this main Combe are many others of less extent, that divide the whole face of the country into long lines of ridgy hills and precipitous dells, which are thickly clothed with copse and timber trees. At the foot of a steep woody declivity is seated Trentishoe church, the smallest we had yet seen; the tower is about twenty feet high, and the interior of the church itself, not more than thirty feet in length

and twelve or fourteen broad; the sittings are of oak, carved in the antique style; for however small or insignificant, the old ecclesiastical structures of our ancestors, they yet possess a substantial and ornamental character. Ascending from this valley we reached the open down, leaving the church and village of Martinhoe on our left and gained once more the sea shore, overhung with shaggy cliffs, on the brow of which lay our route towards Lynton. The aspect of the sea was most peculiar: various shades of green and blue so intermixing as to dapple the whole surface with their wild succession of changing and contrary hues—from the palest grey to the darkest purple. The cliffs lifting up their giant forms, stood frowning along the coast, shattered into pinnacles or undermined by the endless friction of the surge. A most agreeable and interesting path commanding a vast variety of fine scenery, conducted our steps to Leamouth, where the Lea, a small but turbulent brook, flows chafing down to the tide; being at times, when more than usually shallow, lost or absorbed in the sands before it can reach the water's edge. A grand combination of hills distinguishes this spot, as they discover their steep and even precipitous ascents, jagged with rocks and broken cliffs, or veiled in a fresh luxuriance of boughs, that derive additional beauty from the contrast. A pathway turns off on the left leading through some fields and a farm-court: this brought us to a small lane, which presently enlarging upon an open field, gave at once to view a scene of magnificence and sublimity, such as none of those we had hitherto beheld could at all equal. This opening is the entrance to the Valley of Rocks, and "the Castle" with all its array of stony minarets, stood revealed in the full dimensions of its form, from the edge of the sea to the summit of its topmost crag. Cliff after cliff appeared behind, in a long chain of rugged peaks, while the Ocean, now spread into a billowless expanse, lay sleeping among the crags and coves that exhibited the wreck of his tempest hours. Nothing could add to the effect of this contrast of wild and stormy forms bodied forth in enduring strength, beside the calm and silent sea, which looked as if it had never borne a "wrinkle on its azure brow," or stirred up its waves to war with their rocky barriers. Descending a little slope of the hill, we turned a corner of rock, and entered the Valley. The aspect was all of the grand and stern. The piled-up crags on the left hand yet further developed their Titanic structure, and a huge con-

tinuous hill fenced the dell on the right. On the side of this latter, nearly opposite the "Castle," is a pile of rocks known by the name of the "Devil's Cheese Wring," much resembling in form that on Manaton Down called Bowerman's Nose, mentioned in a former part of this Journal. This "Cheese Wring of Satan" has by some persons been supposed a work of art, and that its huge blocks were thus laid together for some religious or superstitious rite, by the Druids; but none other hands than those of Nature have been here concerned, and nothing of an artificial character can in reason be assigned to it.

We next ascended the "Castle" crag, and from a cleft in its crowning turret looked out again upon the sea; a perpendicular precipice descending from this summit to the edge of the waves. A lonely kind of grandeur prevails in every object: all is surpassing the common forms of Nature, and conveys a feeling of wild awe to the mind of the beholder: of this sensation little account can be given in words—but standing on one of the jutting points of the cliff, I felt the full force of Byron's sublime questionings:

> "Are not the mountains, waves, and skies, a part
> Of me, and of my soul, as I of them?
> Is not the love of these deep in my heart
> With a pure passion? should I not contemn
> All pleasures if compared with these?—and stem
> A tide of suffering rather than forego
> Such feelings for the cold and worldly phlegm
> Of those whose eyes are only turned below,
> Gazing upon the ground, with breasts that *cannot* glow.

These thoughts came the more forcible on my mind, from having heard this spot spoken of slightingly, and as not worth the visiting; while I could not behold it without experiencing that indescribable thrill of awful admiration, the very truth of which also is denied by those busy dwellers of the world, to whom the works of Nature are little known, and who seem indeed almost wanting the faculty to perceive or enjoy them.

Walking further up the Valley, the two principal pil s are seen guarding, as it were, the descent to the sea which passes between them. Both of these—"the castle" and its sister crag, are distinguishable by a single rock crowning the summit, and from whatever point they are beheld, appear alike solemn and imposing. The valley itself has a still and lonely character: it is a nook cut off from "all the world beside" and where all the world may be forgotton.

That it has had its dwellers, some traces yet remain: several circles and lines of stones, very similar to those found among the Dartmoor hills, being visible along the course of the dell.

A pathway, which by its appearance, has been recently formed, winds round the second of the hills just mentioned, and conducts to Lynton, a distance of about a mile and a half, entirely along a precipice overlooking the sea. Amid such objects such a path cannot but show at every step new combinations, that bewilder the observer with the rapid succession of feelings which they excite. Below us was the Ocean stretched out until it mingled with the clouds—its waves, rolling with their lowest swell, upon the rocky foot of the hill, left a wreath of foam clasping the base of the long line of cliffs far as the eye could reach. Sea-Gulls and cormorants screaming as they flew, were flapping their wings midway between us and the water, or hovering over the crags like Genii of the place. Above us the mountainous rocks over-hung our path with their projecting masses, while their numerous fissures, and shattered forms declare how frequently they have hurled their fragments below. About the middle point between the valley of rocks and Lynton, this pathway commands also the view of two enormous cliffs, which bound the prospect on either hand, as they descend in one dark mass, and seem to rest their ponderous forms on the bosom of the water. Approaching Lynton, we lost sight of the crag to the left, and the other grows at every step, until joining the end of the path, it is seen immediately opposite, on the other side of the cove or estuary of the Lyn. Lynmouth now lay before us, as in an abyss, and a glimpse of the rocky channel of the river itself was discovered, winding between two almost perpendicular hills—the one bare and jagged with rocks—the other clothed in foliage; a contrast that always heightens the effect of both objects. A few steps further brought us to Lynton, where we arrived with a forcible impression of the magnificence of its neighbouring prospects, and the conviction that all we had heard or read of its grandeur had not done justice to the bold and varied character of this portion of our native scenery.

SUNDAY, JULY 24th. Desiring to commence as early as possible our visits to the grand and beautiful of nature, which had allured us hither, we arose at five o'clock, and appropriated the two hours before our time of breakfasting to walk up by the course of

the west Lyn, one of the three streams which form the main river. The character of this branch is remarkable for a wild magnificence beyond any which had yet met our observation: but our present walk not being immediately on the banks of the stream, but following the road midway the ascent on the right or western side of it, we had more opportunity to remark the hills and precipitous acclivities that enclose its channel, than the Lyn itself, which roars and foams at a vast depth below. The descent to the bed of this stream is amazingly rapid and continuous. A succession of bold hills varying their aspect at every step, seemed as if they had opened their profound depths to afford a passage for the turbulent waters which chafe beneath them. The finest glimpse of the scene is not far from Lynton, on the Barnstaple road, where looking down the descent of a precipice, the Lyn is beheld gushing forth from below the boughs that hide its course, as it turns suddenly a sharp angle, and rolls over a ledge of rock, whitening into a wreath of foam, and divides into many little streams among the huge stones which crowd its rugged channel. Opposite rises a rude and bare hill, shagged with heath and stunted thorn, while the side on which we stood presents a mass of foliage, in the highest degree fresh and luxuriant. Looking to the left, the valley opens on the sea, and gives to our view the wide expanse of ocean, edged with dark cliffs and hills, enclosing the estuary of the Lyn, and the village of Lynmouth below. Perhaps it would be impossible to find another scene, the objects of which, so different and so varied, would yet approach so nearly together: the sea—hills—woods and rivers, and all of the grandest description, combined in one sudden glimpse, a beauty of contrast surprisingly fine and attractive.

Proceeding up the stream, the forms of the mountainous ridges that crowd upon the eye, and interclasp their huge masses; the sudden glimpses of the foaming current beneath, seen through the dark untainted foliage—the height above, and the profound declivity below, impress the beholder with indescribable delight and admiration. The dwellings in this vicinity possess, from their situation, a character peculiarly striking. The fields are steep, in some instances precipitously so; and placed among thick copses or overhanging the wildest passes of the ravine. At a small village called Babrick Mill, a stream named Cherry-brook, mixes its waters with the Lyn,

and above this point the latter loses its wild and rapid character, flowing through a more even country. The soil is here in a high degree fertile, every vegetable production flourishing in abundance. No defect can be charged on nature, and yet the inhabitants appear miserably indigent, and their dwellings are of the most wretched description;—the fact of wrong and oppression is forcibly thrust upon our observation—for if injustice were not commited, such privations could not exist. A fine and fruitful country thinly populated, cannot support its inhabitants! How comes this monstrous anomaly? Ask the imposers of the corn-laws, the exacters of tythes, the gatherers of poor rates—and the collectors of an enormous taxation! These are, in the language of scripture, the 'locust and the caterpillar' that consume one after the other, until nothing remain to be consumed or destroyed.

After breakfast some of our party paid a second visit to the valley of rocks; on their return it was our intention to have attended morning service at Lynton church; but on enquiry it appeared that no service would be performed this forenoon, as the clergyman who serves Lynton, has also another living, and divides the favor of his presence each Sunday, between the two places, allotting the morning service alternately. Thus are the villages of Lynton and Lynmouth, containing together, perhaps, nearly a thousand inhabitants, neglected and defrauded. But the tythes and church dues are doubtless required with the same exactitude, for attendance once in the Sunday, as they would be for twice. No abatement is allowed to them who pay,—all the weight of indulgence is claimed by the receiver. Surely, it is time that the innumerable mischiefs and abuses of our ecclesiastical establishment, should be redressed, and those immense revenues which are lavished to sustain a system worse than useless, applied to some purposes of utility. The interests of real religion and genuine piety, far from receiving any injury, would be materially benefitted, as less penury among the people would contribute to greater morality; and more respect towards the teachers, induce a higher reverence for the doctrines taught. Lamentable indeed is the ignorance and abject condition of the lower class of people in retired country parishes. Some great man—some "mighty paramount" within a little sphere, lords it over their temporal affairs, while the spiritual pastor, far from hecking the aggressions of the

rich, finds it his own interest to support by an enslaving system of mental debasement, the humiliation of the poor; thus, the demoralization is completely effected: the petty powerful oppress with impunity, while the terror-struck victims of wrong are bowed to endure every species of injury by the interference of spiritual or superstitious fears. Is this justice—or ought it to be called religion? Yet is it indisputable fact, which, whoever doubts may be assured of, if he will observe or enquire as we have done.

> But to our woods and wilds, the genuine home
> Of Freedom and of joy. The place of solace
> When wrong hath made us moody, and unhinged
> Our spirits from their balance, because man
> Is man's disturber, and the source of evil
> Which he who made all else, meant not to be.

The village of Lynmouth is placed just at the confluence of the East and West Lyn, and where united, they find a termination in the ocean. Following the course of the latter stream by a pathway which has been wound beneath the precipitous hill which forms its left or southernly bank, we entered upon a scene of the most impressive character. The West Lyn is, for the space of about two miles a succession of cataracts, flowing in various directions, as they roll and rush among huge stones and ledges of rock, heaped into masses of foam, or torn asunder in a multitude of little streams, that seem to have forcibly rent themselves a channel among the stony fragments by which their course is impeded. These fragments are masses of rock and piles of smaller stones, which have fallen from the impending hills, tearing away with them the soil wherein they had been imbedded, and leaving their former places still observable in the hollows and indentures they have left on the face of the acclivity. In some instances a stratum of soil having collected on these rocks, and the current dividing around them, little islands are formed in the midst of its channel. These are covered with a growth of bushes displaying the brightest verdure—ash, oak, willows, rowan, hazel, —in short every species that the vicinity affords, here flourish as in a peculiar garden contrived by nature for a nursery of her productions. As it is ascended, the river seems to increase in turbulence. A deep and incessant roar expresses the violence of its movements. We had seen nothing hitherto that might compare with the cataracts of the

West Lyn; even those of the East Ockment could not equal them, while the surrounding objects combined to entrance the magnificence and beauty of the present scene far above that of Holstock Wood and the Belstone tors, described in a former journal. The hill at the foot of which we were pursuing the margin of the river is a huge accumulation of rocks, protruding continually from the soil, and overhanging the dell: the only growth above the size of heath plants, is stunted thorns, which clasp their rugged forms to the precipices, as if to retain the crumbling mass by their coiled and interlacing roots. The hill on the other side of the glen presents an aspect of the most striking contrast—clothed with copse, principally Oak and Ash, its foliage is remarkable for a freshness and brilliancy of hues far exceeding that seen in any of the districts through which we have lately passed. Beneath the boughs the torrent Lyn is beheld to double advantage, as its white foam gushes up from the pools and hollows where the stream has dashed its way. The pathway terminates at a wild and impetuous fall, the waters urging their course over the edge of a huge rock, rush down upon a bed of stones, the wreck of the mountain side, and form a thousand lesser cataracts as they proceed along their channel. Beyond this there is no ascending the verge of the stream, as the thickness of the copse, and ruggedness of the acclivity precluded even our adventurous steps A track might indeed be carried further on, and by the sound of the current, and some glimpses of it which had met our eyes from the opposite hill, such a path would lay open scenes of considerable beauty and grandeur.

During the whole of to-day a dense mist or cloud of snowy whiteness has rested along the hills and frequently descended into the depths of the valleys: sometimes obscuring prospects we would fain have had visible, but at intervals also, increasing the effect of the scenery by contrast, or by veiling the recesses of the ravines and steep corners of the hills—imparting a sort of mysterious uncertainty, that aided the awful character of the whole scene.

Rush on thou torrent River! thy wild path
Sweeps through th' eternal mountains! rock on rock
Restrains thy flood in vain: with flashing fall
Precipitous thou rollest, and break'st through
All hindrance, as a giant of the vales.
Thy voice is like the thunders of the Highest,

Yet come as from th' abyss—untameable!
Who shall thy steps retard; who on thy hand
Which crushes the steep rocks, impose a chain?
Beauty, the dreadful beauty, which to awe,
Changes its aspect, dwellest still with thee;
And over thy hoar cataracts and dark woods
Passes its mighty spell. Thou passioned river
That seemest in thy motion and its changes
Almost a living and intelligent thing,
What eye shall thee behold, and not receive
Part of thy spirit, and of thee become
The votary and admirer? who here wander
Into the green recesses that embower
Thy sweeping waters, and not so partake
The freedom and the extacy of Nature?
These vales become a temple—the rough hills
Its towering pinnacles—the vaulted boughs,
A noble architecture, whose rich tracery
Is wrought in living blossoms; and o'er all,
Thy voice, a voice of worship and adoring,
Unto the Everlasting!

The evening affording another occasion for a walk, we visited Lynmouth by a different path from that we had taken in the morning. This little town is situated at the foot of the hill on which Lynton is placed, the road between them being excessively steep, although wound about the ascent as gradually as the situation will admit. Looking from below, the scene possesses a character completely Alpine. Cottages appear perched midway among the cliffs, and on the front of the hill, like eagles' nests, overhung with trees, and seeming almost to totter on the verge of a precipice, yet far beneath the summits, which, bare and rocky, tower in lonely pre-eminence over the valley. The two rivers, East and West Lyn, preserve their wild and turbulent scenery almost to the edge of the sea, forming a fine contrast with the rugged beach and expanse of waters beyond. Two bridges, one of two, the other having only one arch, cross these streams, which join a short distance below.

On the left or northernly bank of the east Lyn is a pleasant walk, winding through a hilly wood, just above the course of the river,

which, though an interesting stream, even thus low, is by no means equal in grandeur to the West Lyn, before described. The mists of the day clearing as we returned to Lynton, we had the pleasure of looking out upon the ocean and its surrounding cliffs, already tinged with the dusky hues of evening. The tide was approaching the shore, and its long line of waves broke one over another on the rocky edge, leaving a border of snowy foam around the dark sands that form the estuary of the Lyns. A fine variety of foliage and vegetable growth reaches close to the beach; and though the trees have in a few instances been slightly changed by the s. w. gales, yet on those parts of the hill which are sheltered from the prevalence of this baneful wind, all appears luxuriant beyond example. By the time we had reached Lynton it was nearly dark, and we concluded our perambulations with the satisfying reflection that our day had been not less usefully than pleasantly spent; since the great scenes of nature, which had been the objects of our research, had left on our minds an impression as exalting as it was delightful.

MONDAY, 25th. The morning proving peculiarly fine, we arose at four o'clock, and in the course of half an hour, were abroad enjoying all the freshness and serenity of the dawn: our object on this occasion was to explore the course of the east Lyn, in the neighbourhood, of which will be found the most magnificent scenes of a spot abounding in all the indescribable perfections of natural grandeur. Following the river from Lynmouth, by a path which has been carried along the side of several hills, that rise almost perpendicularly from the ravine which forms the channel of the torrent, the prospect here grows in lofty grandeur at every step—the ascending hills become enormous precipices, frequently turning off into sharp angles, and abruptly changing the direction of the valleys and with them, that of the river also. A noble array of foliage covers the opposite hill—that on which we walked being almost entirely destitute of this adornment: this want of growth appears indeed, only the effect of an exposure to the south and westerly winds, for the soil is the same, and in all instances where the face of the declivity is protected by any intervening ascent, or by some change of position, trees are found waving among the rocks with the same luxuriance as elsewhere. That portion of the hill between the path and the river is an uninterrupted precipice, from below which

the water is seen winding its way among rocks and boughs—frequently captivating the attention by its foamy flashes, as it falls between the stones, or sweeps suddenly round some corner of the hills, into the gorge of another dell. Here the character of the scene is vastness: the amazing depth of the valleys—the height and huge extent of the hills—crowding in new combinations, as they are gradually approached or receded from,—all form a union of grandeur and solemn beauty, not to be found elsewhere. Our time for viewing this prospect was also peculiarly fortunate: a bright and serene July morning—the sky perfectly cloudless, with the sun not more than two hours above the horison; the lights and shades increasing momently their contrast, as it was seen or lost for intervals over the summit of the wildest ridges. In the lowest depths of the dells some clouds were still lying, a portion of those which had yesterday obscured the whole scene: these touched by the morning rays, rolled slowly up the sides of the hills, and appeared above them, waving, like a banner, over the shadows below. To detail all the beauty which charmed us, were impossible, for every step presented a new variety of forms and hues. The path, winding considerably, leads to a descending track, at the foot of which we came to the "Meeting of the waters"—where the east and middle Lyn unite their streams at the corner of a steep and thickly wooded hill. This spot is as wild and beautiful as can be imagined—the opposite woods have a character different from those already described, being full of large trees, mostly oaks, which lift themselves boldly up from among the lower foliage, and stretch their long boughs over the glen beneath. The middle Lyn, chafing among its rocks, forms a multitude of little falls, and runs for a long way through a ravine merely wide enough to contain its current. As it meets the angle of the hill, its turbulence seems to increase, darkened with boughs and verdure, a glimpse only of its snowy foam, can reach the eye, until the east Lyn issuing, as it were, by surprise, from the other dell, receives into its bosom the chiding torrent;

> Deep in the loneliest, and the loveliest spot
> Their confluent waters blend—a rush, a roar—
> And they, for aye, are mingled, and flow on
> As never had they led their streams apart;
> But of one fountain springing, had entwined
> Their kindred billows from their very source.

In passing through this wood, we observed a great variety of wild flowers, some indeed which we had never seen grow wild until here. The same profusion of floral productions was remarkable in this as in other parts of the country; the effect, no doubt, of the severity of the winter, which while it improved the powers of vegetation, destroyed the birds and insects that usually prey upon its early buds and blossoms. Birds, indeed, proved so extremely scarce, that the woods are quite silent. We have even walked for several hours, in the most sequestered places, without seeing or hearing one of the feathered tribe.

Leaving with regret the recesses of the vale, we returned to the pathway, and shortly after came to Hill's Ford, where two branches of the middle Lyn combine their streams, but without any circumstance worthy note. An old road overgrown with grass, and impeded by hedges, led up an adjoining hill. With some difficulty we followed it through a brake until it was intersected by a more frequented path. We did not learn to whom appertains the right of thus annoying the public by shutting up roads and prohibiting pathways; but, as several notices were appended to the trees, threatening all trespassers with the terrors of legal prosecution, our conclusion was that the lord of the soil must be a very uncourteous personage, to deny so small a boon to visitors as the privilege of walking through his domain. But, in such petty ways, is too often evinced that overbearing spirit which would, if possible, be shown to more mischievous ends. Let such persons, however, be informed, that we have held all their said notices in due contempt, and finding a route in despite of all obstacles, left none of the beauties of the neighbourhood unseen, because a board stuck up on a tree forbade us to behold them.

On the brow of this hill we passed the Manor House of East Lyn, mentioned by Risdon as one of the places held by Henry de Hallesworth, in the reign of Edward the Second. A grassy lane opens upon the summit of that steep and lofty hill, on the side of which we had passed, in our walk up the east Lyn. Here a scene of the grandest description burst at once upon the eye. The valley of the East Lyn narrowing below to a ravine, displays its wonderful depth from the ridge of the hills to the river's bed—the eye looks down as to an abyss—and wanders over the precipitous declivities, seeking a resting place from the profound depths of the descent. Perhaps, there is more of awful and lonely magnificence in this prospect, than in any

other of the kind, among all that present themselves in this vicinity, where nature has been lavish of her wonders.

We now returned along the slope of the hill to Lynmouth, and thence to Lynton, having by half past eight o'clock, been engaged for four hours in beholding and admiring some of the most noble scenery ever imaged forth in the wildest meads of nature.—We had lived a whole day, as it seemed, before the hour of breakfast, yet on our return to Lynton, found other visitors, who do not, perhaps, consider themselves indolent folks, just stirring abroad. We had also every advantage from the fresh aspect imparted by the morning to every object of our admiration. A clearer or more beautiful dawn never broke upon the sea or land.: all was radiant with light and beauty. By the hour of our return a dense mist had rolled in from the sea, obscuring the whole face of the country with its thick folds. which wreathed in snowy whiteness over the hills and among the valleys of the Lyn, where we had been recently wandering in the full glow of sunshine.

After breakfast, the intense heat of the weather proving unfavorable to walking, we found agreeable employment at home until noon, when it was proposed to take an excursion on the water, for the purpose of surveying the cliffs along the coast, towards the "Valley of Rocks;" and also that one of our party might have an opportunity of shooting some of the sea birds which frequent those crags in great numbers and varieties: cormorants, murrs, parrot-bills, naths, sea-pidgeons, gulls, &c. &c. A boat being engaged at Lynmouth, we left at one o'clock, and were soon below the enormous precipices of the "Old Man" and "the Castle;" appellations bestowed on the two most prominent cliffs adjoining the Valley of Rocks. Unfortunately for us, a thick mist hung over the upper portion of the crags, obscuring their summits from view, and at times descending even to the water's edge. After rowing some way among the rocks that here throng thickly about the shore, the wild screaming voices of the birds announced that we had disturbed them from their accustomed haunts. Several young, yet unable to fly, sat in the crannies of the rocks, others rose on the wing, and flying off to the sea, afforded a mark to the shotsman; the old ones all the time soaring beyond reach, and screaming in wild rage at this invasion of their peculiar domain. The echoes from the cliffs prolonging the report

of the shots, perhaps, contributed to their alarm, though we were informed by the boatmen that they are often visited in this way by sportsmen, and also, that in the season, it is usual to search the ledges of the crags for eggs, of which a large quantity is sometimes obtained. One of these men had frequently, he said, climbed the cliff on this perilous employment, an adventure, to judge from the appearance of the rocks, of no small risk; the whole extent of their line presenting the form of a huge wall, beetling over the waters; without the least hold beyond that afforded by the crannies which seamed its face. The cloud rising, we had an opportunity of observing the aspect of these precipices with more precision. The rock which composes them is naturally full of fissures, that divide it into long even lines or clefts: the collision of the water gradually rounds off and wears away the edges of these fissures, until the under portions giving way, bring down those above them. As high as the tides and waves usually ascend this undermining has gone on working holes and caverns in the foundation, that makes that part of the cliffs which abuts on the water, appear quite unstable; and indeed, the whole aspect of the coast evinces how much the ocean has here been gaining on the land. Many falls have taken place in this neighbourhood; and about Ilfracombe and Watermouth, we could easily trace great intrusion upon the shore; in some places, portions of cultivated ground had been brought away, and regular pathways intercepted by the fall.

The appearance of these mighty cliffs, as seen from this side, is tremendous. Although we could discern their higher portions but dimly through the intervening mist. One projection, called the "Yellow Rock," I suppose from its being partly overgrown with a yellow kind of moss or lichen, presents a bold and imposing front to the breakers which roll furiously round its base; and, doubtless, when roused and irritated by the tempests, dash their billows high against its towering form. In some places a huge cleft extends through the whole face of the rock, into which the surge beats itself to foam, and seems knocking for an entrance within its immense barriers. Near one of these was pointed out the spot where a man was, a few years since, killed by a fall from above, while diverting himself with his gun among the "Castle" crags; a slip of his foot hurled him on the rocks beneath, where he was dashed to pieces—his remains being taken up by a boat sent for that purpose.

After remaining here for about two hours we returned to Lynmouth, where we found bright sunshine and a clear prospect—but the cloud did not rise from the sea until the evening, which in some degree consoled us for the disappointment occasioned by the want of a clear atmosphere during our otherwise very pleasant little excursion.

The evening of this day proved the loveliest we had experienced for the summer; and our authority in affairs of the weather, and the aspect of heaven and earth, is surely, by this time, worthy credence. Not to lose an instant of the pleasure to be derived from our favourite objects—a pleasure of the noblest and purest description, we paid a second visit to the cataracts of the West Lyn, already described, but worthy a thousand visits, and capable of exciting new feelings of admiration and delight every time they are beheld. A radiant serenity prevailed, and communicated a spirit of repose to all except the impetuous Lyn itself, which poured its snow-like torrent beneath boughs that moved not to a single air. The scent of innumerable flowers and oderous leaves seemed to bestow an incense around, that mingled its sweetness with the spray of the rushing waters. Looking above, the two hills that enclose the valley, lifted their dark ridges in contrast with the clear depth of the sky, whose "rose-hues slept there lovingly."

At the upper end of this glen, a huge mass of rock towers up against the face of either eminence, the narrow interval forming a passage for the river, into the bed of which were hurled the severed blocks which, at some unrecorded period, had been rent away to form the gorge of the ravine. Immediately beween these giant piles, the whole stream rolls down among the rocks; and over them appeared the moon, just showing her pearly crescent amid the bright hues of sunset. Around us bent the boughs in every variety of foliage—combining the unchanged freshness of spring, with all the deeper hues of its summer maturity. Turning to gaze in the direction we had come from, the broad ocean burst upon our view, glassy and waveless, and hued with the purpling shades of July twilight.—The spot seemed enchanted or holy; a thrill of rapture confessed the unison of our feelings with its scene; and after a long and silent contemplation, we departed with regret from a place and prospect, not to be thought on without an admiration, for the expression of which, words are but too greatly inadequate.

Yes! beauty still shall haunt that secret spot
Like its own genius, never to decay;
A permanent possession, which cannot
By man, or man's misdeeds be torn away;
Morn shall look down and love that haunt, and even
There shed the influence of her loveliest heav'n.

The hues of spring shall waken—summer still
Balm the sweet valley, like a favorite home;
And e'en yon sunset-ray that dyes the hill
A thousand times upon those crags shall come;
It hath been so before, and it shall be
For other hearts to feel, and eyes to see.

The thick groves, and the wild descending river
Shall each have their renewal, and remain—
Like forms immortal, living on for ever,
Young as at first, and beautiful again—
While we, thus lingering and partaking, view
God through his works, and grow immortal too.

Ocean! thou art the witness! thy blue billows
Spread out their clear expanse in open sight—
On thy pure breast day's latest sparkle pillows
Its blush of parting, ere the birth of night—
That like a floating vision hovers o'er
Thy waste of waters, and their loveliest shore.

TUESDAY, JULY 26th. The weather continuing exceedingly fine, we resolved to enjoy it to the utmost, and with that intention arose this morning yet earlier than yesterday—walking out before four o'clock to visit the hills bordering the East Lyn towards Countesbury, the last parish of Devonshire in this direction. We could not but remark that no other of the visitors at Lynton were yet risen from slumber, to partake the beauty and freshness of the morning hour. Nothing can compensate for this neglect—among such scenes as we are now exploring every moment is precious: every change on Nature's countenance should be observed and admired

"Oh! how cans't thou renounce the boundless store
Of charms, which nature to her votary yields!
The warbling woodland—the resounding shore,
The pomp of groves, and garniture of fields;

All that the genial ray of morning gilds,
And all that echoes to the song of Even;
All that the mountain's sheltering bosom shields,
And all the dread magnificence of heaven!
Oh! how cans't thou renounce, and hope to be forgiven!
BEATTIE.

Passing Lynmouth, we took our way through the wood on the north side of the East Lyn, and thence to the summit of the hill which overlooks its valley. The sun had just lifted his "blazing forehead" above the waters, and tinged with his beams the cliffs and crags around us—a golden lustre played over the rugged rocks on the opposite hill, and lighted up the village of Lynton with his first flame; while Lynmouth and the ravine of the Lyn were still immersed in shadow. From the spot on which we stood the prospect was magnificent: looking towards the Lyn, we beheld the opposite mountainous hill bare and craggy "from turret to foundation stone," lifting its head into full sunshine, while a dark edge of shadow crossed it midway down, leaving its base clothed in a hue, which, by comparison, might be called, misty twilight; the East Lyn, tufted with overhanging boughs, came foaming down the glen, making every bound, which it took among the rocks, with a gush of snowy spray. At the head of the vale, wandering down the side of another hill, appears the course of a brook, which, when swelled by rains, is seen from here, a fine addition to the landscape, bounded in by hills that rise thickly on each other, until a higher than the rest overlooks them and terminates the view. Turning from this scene, and directing the eye outward to the ocean, the expanse of waters, calm as if a wind had never breathed, lay brightening in the morning radiance. A vast wreath of vapours coiling round the distant horison, were tossed into all the numberless forms imagination can conceive—here mounting into feathery films, and there scooped out into enormous caverns, that rested their misty columns upon the blue waves. This wreath of clouds touching the cliffs at the further end of the "Valley of Rocks," stole slowly along the shore, until winding around the last hill, it crept up the ascent, and shrouding the glittering church and village of Lynton, found a resting place in the valley on the western side of the hill. Contrast, the distinguishing character of the great natural objects in the vicinity of Lynton, was here powerfully felt. The difference between these two scenes, was more striking than any

description can convey a just idea of—by merely looking in opposite directions, the whole was varied, and a wild and rugged landscape exchanged for the serenity of the sea, and stern majesty of its bordering cliffs.

Retracing our steps, we descended the valley at a higher point, and from thence reaching the road from Lynton to Porlock, we returned home by the sea cliffs. The mist had now almost involved the whole scene, and lay rolling on the waters, which displayed through the openings of the cloud, a fine variety of hues and shades, changing from deep blue to pale grey and vivid green—until the further intrusion of the vapours hid all from our sight. The day proving too intensely fervent for any further excursion, it was not until the evening that we ventured out, when a desire to enter the Valley of Rocks from the upper or Lynton end, induced us to take a walk in that direction This entrance presents the whole line of the cliffs in a fine point of view—their dark rugged points towered against the horizon, and showed the outline of every jagged and crannied rock with great exactness. The Castle, in particular, looked amazingly bold and lofty, an effect considerably heightened by the descending sun happening at the time to be immediately behind its huge mass of prominent crags. The hill on the left, higher than either of the opposite cliffs, also shewed to great advantage. On its declivity are many lines of stones, thus collected by the hand of man, and much like those frequently found on Dartmoor, in the neighbourhood of Celtic villages. This valley also exhibits, as before-mentioned, the remains of several circles of stones, indicating habitations of some of that vanished race. An extensive enclosure wall has most probably absorbed the largest portion of these remains. Approaching the Castle, we experienced all the benefit of "the shadow of a great rock in a thirsty land," and seated ourselves on the rocks to contemplate the wild and desert aspect of the scene. Not a shrub or even a heath bush clothes the solitary steeps, where myriads of huge stones lie scattered in wild disorder, as if the work of a boisterous ocean, when this valley with all its rocks lay concealed beneath the great waters. That the waters did cover them may be positively inferred from the fact, that on the top of the Castle cliff, in the crevices of the crag, at least 250 feet above the sea which rolls below, we found pieces of stone, apparently hardened from the mud of the

shore, and bearing the correct impression of shells in various positions; doubtless the reliques of some dateless age, when the whole of this portion of the land was beneath the waves of the stormy deep. The pathway over the cliffs conducted us back to Lynton; of which, on this occasion, may be mentioned a few additional particulars. The two villages or small towns of Lynton and Lynmouth are situated, the one on the brow the other at the foot of the same hill—the roads between them being exceedingly steep and difficult of ascent. Many houses of tolerable appearance have within a few years been built in both places, for the accommodation of visitors; there are also several respectable inns. In Lynmouth is a bath-house of neat appearance, lately erected, where hot and cold baths are prepared. Small vessels come up with the tide, the estuary of the Lyn, and a steam packet touches there every week. The parish church is at Lynton; it is a very plain building with a low battlemented tower; within, it possesses nothing remarkable. The view of the sea from the churchyard may be noticed as having attracted the attention of tourists, but it is not superior to many others in the immediate vicinity.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 27th. The intense warmth of the weather obliged us to adopt the time of travelling observed in more fervent climates. We therefore left Lynton at one o'clock this morning, having breakfasted at midnight, with the doors and windows all open on account of the heat. The night, or whatsoever it was, was fresh and fair as could be desired; and the stars looked down upon us, pale indeed, in the summer twilight, but without a single cloud. As we descended from the village, the rushing roar of the Lyn came up from its glen, and, as fancy would interpret, was bidding farewell to those on whom it had bestowed so much pleasure. We could distinguish the sound of each different fall, like the voice of a friend with which we were familiar; and stopped several times to listen, as we passed along the road toward Barnstaple, which crosses the side of the hill immediately above the river. Behind us lay the sea, slumbering in a perfect calm, and the woods of the valley of Lyn, unmoved by the slightest breeze. The twilight grew momently more clear, shedding a glimmer of the future day around our path, while the glow worms retiring to their recesses "paled their ineffectual fires" at its approach.

We soon attained an open down, from whence we could already

perceive the gleam of sunrise brighten the north-east—the Exmoor hills lay stretching along the horison on our left, and on the right appeared Hangman's Hill, above Coombe-Martin, with other bold hills in that neighbourhood, over most of which we had passed in our way from Ilfracombe to Lynton. These formed a bold outline, as their dusky edges were defined on the clearness of the unclouded sky. We next passed the village of Parracombe, and the Eden, a brook already named in our former journey. About three miles beyond this, we had the gratification of seeing the sun emerge from the horison, arrayed in all its splendors, his rays waving around him like tresses, as he lifted his brow once more to look upon the "round world and them that dwell therein!"

Walking on rejoicing in his presence, we passed the pretty river Yeo, on its way to join the Taw at Barnstaple, the vale in which it flows being distinguished for its beauty and wild scenery. On the brow of the hill the road winds by the church and village of Sherwell—a name very usual for country places, and according to Risdon, signifying "Clear well"—an appellation here deservedly applied, a rivulet and well in the midst of the place, possessing remarkable brightness and transparency.

At exactly seven o'clock we reached Barnstaple, which we found in a world of bustle on account of the election—several opposing interests, "red, green, and blue, with all their trumpery," being actively at work preparing for the mighty contest. The whole town seemed "dazzled and drunk" with anticipation of this political orgies—and the expectance of another candidate, whose arrival was by some untoward event, retarded, excited a constant speculation. Scarcely could we find place or accommodation in the midst of the turmoil; which promised an abundant source of folly, corruption, and intoxication during the remainder of this, and the whole of the ensuing week. Thus, we thought, are virtuous delegates chosen to legislate for a great people!—this is their fountain of power, and such the instruments of advancement to the most august heights of national dignity! A single glance at such a scene is sufficient to show that "all is false and hollow"—and all the eloquence enlisted in the service of such a system, an artful glazing over of corruption, only calculated to make the "worst appear the better reason; an ominous and fearful result! The continued heat

of the weather obliging us to pass the day at Barnstaple, we visited the market place, Guildhall, and public rooms—all of recent erection, and a considerable ornament to the town. A pleasant ride in the cool of the evening brought us to Great Torrington, from whence we departed early for Okehampton. About midway of our journey we had again a fine opportunity of witnessing sunrise; where the glorious luminary emerging from the hills of Exmoor, and shedding a crimson lustre over the broad and cloudy horison. At Okehampton, more fortunate than the Patriarch's Dove, we found a resting place for the sole of our foot;—and as at this point we began, so we here conclude the story of our peregrinations.

Yet ends not here the pleasure we have won
In wandering and beholding—nor the knowledge
That from the beautiful and the enduring
Comes on our spirits—as the morning sunrays
Brighten the dusk cloud with their early flame.
Yes! ours hath been delight which shall not perish
Though exiled from its source—but still renew
In memory's meditation, what we felt;
When by the rough rocks, and eternal billows,
And solemn woods, and cataracts of foam
Treading like native dwellers of the wild.
We have heard other waves, and other rivers
Than unto us belong—and heard the winds
Play in the clefts that seam the ocean crag:
Or where like hoary tresses, curl the breakers
Around some rock that lifts its ancient head
Amid the dread immensity of waters.
We have beheld the waving forests lean
Upon the rugged hills; and the bare cliffs
Jaggy and stern, protrude against the sky.
We have communed with these in their wild places
And desolate abodes, and unto them
Frequent in thought returning, will again
At least in thought be present, and recall
The beauty and the glory left behind.

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