

employed them only two have been dismissed ; and it is an almost unheard-of thing for them to leave of their own accord, excepting to be married.

The hours of work are from half-past nine until half-past five, excepting on Saturdays, when they leave at four. They are allowed an hour in the middle of the day for their dinner, but they must bring it with them, as they are not allowed to leave the office during business hours.

Messrs. Baring and some other large banking firms employ a few women clerks as coupon-sorters, but the demand for them is so very small that it seems scarcely worth while to mention it. It is quite essential that all aspirants to this work should have remarkably keen eyesight, and they are not taken without the very best references. As a general rule, the preference is given to the relations of the male clerks. The hours of work are from ten to five.

The Junior Army and Navy Stores employ ladies as clerks ; if possible, the manager always chooses daughters of military and naval officers. They are expected to have a very thorough knowledge of book-keeping, besides a legible handwriting ; so for these posts some previous training is usually necessary, as the

average young lady's knowledge of arithmetic upon leaving school can scarcely be said to be thorough, though I am glad to hear that more attention is being paid to this branch of education, and that at some of the large day schools for middle-class girls even book-keeping forms a regular part of the ordinary course of study.

It is always an advantage for girls to begin any profession they may intend to adopt immediately upon leaving school, before they have acquired the pernicious habit of wasting their time, which is almost inevitable without some definite occupation.

The state of things I have attempted to describe is surely very different from what it was some fifty years ago ; and if the number of women dependent on their own exertions has increased to the extent that statisticians wish us to believe, surely the possibilities of their supporting themselves in a suitable manner have also increased to an extent sufficient to encourage the zealous advocates of the higher employment of women with the conviction that some of the most substantial advantages which they have been striving to secure have been silently granted almost without a struggle.

MERCY GROGAN.

A RAMBLE ROUND AND ABOUT PEWSEY VALE.

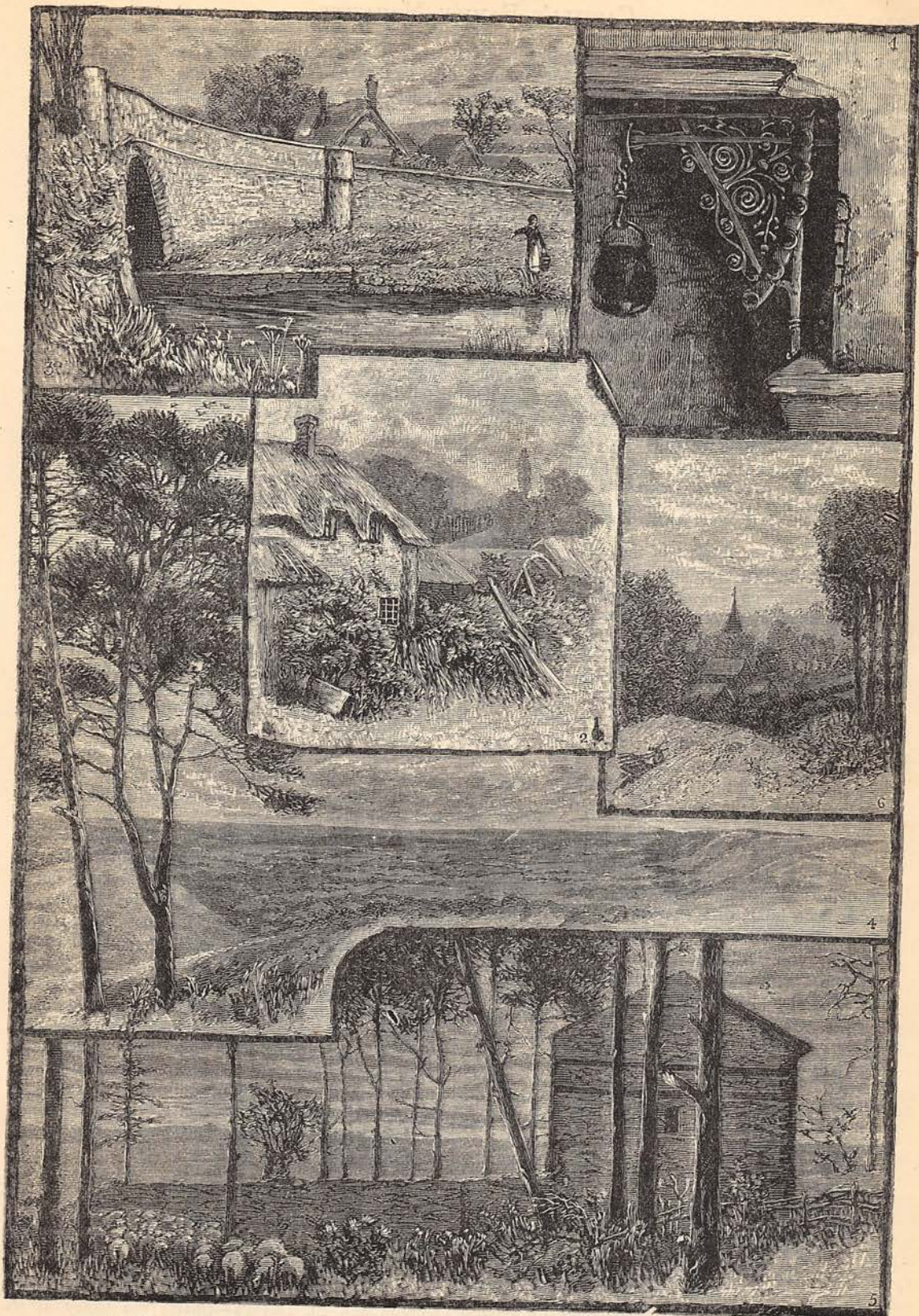


THE Vale of Pewsey, so well known to agriculturists for its corn-growing capacities, is a longitudinal depression, extending for somewhat more than twenty miles from east to west, and varying from two or three to ten miles in

breadth, the widest part being towards the west. It lies entirely within the county of Wilts, its eastern extremity verging on the borders of Hampshire, and stretching westward across nearly two-thirds of the former county. It is almost equally apportioned between North and South Wilts, the western half belonging to the former, the eastern to the latter division. A curved line drawn across the valley from St. Martin's Hill on the north, to the *debouchure* of the Avon Valley on the south, would roughly mark the boundary line between the two Divisions of the county at this point. The valley is bounded in on all sides, except the south-west, by long continuous ranges of chalk hills, with outlets, through which in most cases small water-courses run, on the south, south-east, and north-east. It bends slightly round at the latter point, and by a narrow prolongation is united to the marshy valley, drained by the Kennet, which extends throughout the length of Berkshire. The hills to the south form

the northern boundary of the Plain of Salisbury, and have no southern slope, properly so called, the land from their summit stretching away, plateau-like, in gentle undulations, like the petrified waves of a tempest-tossed sea. Those to the north and east are, for the most part, boldly defined, and on their further side overlook magnificent tracts of the most beautiful agricultural scenery. These hills form part of the North Downs, and are excellent pasture grounds for the innumerable flocks of sheep that browse their mossy verdure, and for which this district is so justly celebrated. For the most part they run along the borders of the valley in gently curving lines, and at a tolerably regular elevation, but rise at times suddenly to rounded eminences of greater height, from which splendid views of the valley and the surrounding country can be obtained, the whole appearing spread out like a map at the feet of the spectator. From below, these heights form interesting and conspicuous features in the landscape. They are more often than not crowned with clumps of lofty firs, and, before the days of the electric telegraph, were probably often utilised as convenient positions for the beacon fires, whose flickering radiance spread around for many miles the intelligence of great events anxiously and expectantly looked for, in hope or fear, in times of emergency and danger.

Many of these summits bear on their scarred brows the remains of ancient British or Roman earthworks, and numerous Druidical tumuli are scattered along the neighbouring Downs, or in the hollows beneath their shadow. A solemn stillness reigns around, broken only occasionally by the distant tinkling of



1. CHIMNEY CORNER, BURBAGE.

2. VILLAGE OF OARE.

3. BRIDGE AT WILCOTT.

4. THE VALE.

5. THE SHEEPFOLD ON ST. MARTIN'S HILL.

6. VIEW NEAR FEWSEY.

the sheep-bells, the barking of the shepherd's dog, or the bleating of the flocks. And in the pervading calm, the free air beating softly and balmily against our fevered brows, our minds revert with wondrous strength to that long-ago past, upon whose very footsteps we are treading, surrounded as we are by the many relics of its warfare and religious superstitions. The numerous clusters of trees marking the site of some quiet hamlet, the far-stretching woods, and the long lines of hedgerows intersecting each other in all directions, seem again the forest abode of our ancestors; the smoke curling upwards here and there through the branches, is that arising from their wattled huts; and we people the vale again in our imagination with the forms of the brave men whose ashes lie around us, awaiting the fierce onslaught on yonder entrenchments, within whose formidable enclosures encamp the Roman legions by whom they have been "conquered, not subdued."

"For by the Druids taught that death but shifts
The vital scene, they that prime fear despise,
And, prone to rush on steel, disdain to spare
An ill-saved life that must again return."

Yonder on the north-west of the valley is Round-away Down, about a mile and a half to the north of Devizes. Here, on the 13th of July, 1643, the Parliamentary forces were defeated by the Royalist troops. Some miles to the east is Huish Hill, where the remains of ancient subterranean dwellings were discovered some little time since. Oare Hill comes next, the little valley underlying which is extremely picturesque, being almost surrounded by steep hills, and forming by far one of the prettiest "bits" of rural scenery in the neighbourhood. Not far from here is St. Martin's Hill, with its Roman camp and entrenchments, and further to the east, the elevation gradually lessening from this point, extend those continuations known locally as Leigh Hill, Durlley Hill, and Wolfhall Hill. Overlapping the three latter can be just discerned the southern edge of Savernake Forest. The hills to the east extend from the height known as Inkpen Beacon (1,017 feet above the sea), past Shalbourne and Bottle Hills, to the downs overhanging and almost surrounding the retired little hamlet of Tidcombe, where they turn sharply round to the west, and run along, except at the *débochure* of the Bourne river, in almost a straight line past Wexcombe, East Grafton, and Everleigh Downs, and the Easton and Pewsey Hills, as far as the Salisbury Avon, whence they continue in irregular curves to the south-west, under the names of Cleeve Hill, Wilsford Hill, and Little Cheverel Down.

The valley is drained by numerous small streams, the affluents of the Kennet, and the two Avons. The Bourne rises near the two villages of Collingbourne, and, flowing in a south-westerly direction along the eastern edge of the Salisbury Plain, joins the Avon at Salisbury. The last-mentioned river itself, by means of its numerous affluents, drains the entire centre of the valley, as the Bristol Avon does its western extremity, and passing out through a depression between the Cleeve and Pewsey Hills, winds its

serpentine course through the rich and picturesque valley of the Avon.

About eighty years ago the Kennet and Avon Canal was constructed as a means of through-water communication between London and Bristol, and passes through the entire length of the valley. Until within the last fifteen years considerable traffic in heavy goods was carried on by this route, but since the opening of the Berks and Hants extension railway about that time to connect the lines which hitherto stopped short at Hungerford and Devizes, its usefulness has considerably diminished, and it is now comparatively little used. Its different levels are reached by a system of "locks," which are very numerous in the part extending between Hungerford and Wootton Rivers. The highest "reach" during its entire course is that immediately below Wolfhall Hill, and to keep it navigable the water is forced up to it from a lower level by means of a "feeder" and powerful engines situated at Crofton. Numerous brick-built bridges cross the canal in its course, of which the accompanying sketch of one at Wilcott, near Pewsey, will form a fair representation. At Savernake Station, not far from Burbage, and underlying the railway at that point, the canal passes through a tunnel about three-quarters of a mile in length, named after the noble family of "Bruce," whose stately mansion in Savernake Park is not far distant.

We have already mentioned one railway passing through the valley. Another, a branch line to Marlborough, is connected with it at Savernake. This is in course of extension both ways—to reach Swindon on the north, and towards the south to run transversely across the valley to Collingbourne, and thence to Andover, thus effecting a much-needed through-communication with the systems north and south of the country.

Of the many excellent highways that intersect the vale in all directions, the most important is that running along its central part and branching out in diverse directions towards its extremities. It may be mentioned as an interesting fact that the "Hope" coach—a veritable remnant of the "good old coaching days"—traversed this route daily in its journey from Devizes to Hungerford until the opening of the railway between these towns in 1863. Good roads, many of them extremely picturesque with their high fern and flower-covered banks, and the branches of oak and elm interlacing overhead, strike out from it here and there, and bring within the traveller's easy reach the clustering homes that nestle together in some pleasant hollow, or beside some meandering brook, or right away—

"Far from the busy haunts of men"

—beneath the shadow of the distant hillside. Many of these roads are evidently those which have been used for centuries, and an old Roman road, probably *Ermin Street*—constructed to connect Southampton and St. David's—crosses the valley at its eastern end. It may also be mentioned here in passing that the famous ancient British entrenchment

known as the *Wansdyke* cuts the valley at almost the same point, and skirts its northern boundary for many miles.

As might be expected, every place in the valley—even the towns—wears a decidedly agricultural aspect. There are few manufactures, and the prosperity of the larger villages and towns mainly depends on the patronage bestowed on them by the folks of the “country-side.” But wherever the traveller turns his footsteps he cannot fail to meet with much to interest and to please—quaint villages with their rustic greens, and timber-built, straw-thatched cottages; the moss-grown windlass-wells close by; the venerable churches, whose grey walls remain with little alteration as they existed in pre-Reformation times; the surrounding churchyards, heaped high with the accumulated

dust of centuries, and darkly overshadowed by the far-spreading branches of yews coeval with the sanctuary; the faded remnants of ancient halls and lordly avenues; the ivied cottage; the busy mill; the well-stocked farm; and above all, those glorious fields of waving corn that spread their richness in golden sheets over the whole length and breadth of the valley. All around, wherever we go, we are met by the sights and sounds of joy and industry, and sweetness and beauty; the air is redolent of health—fresh, pure, and invigorating; and in the exhilaration of the moment we almost involuntarily give expression to the joyful words of the Psalmist, nowhere so fully and so forcibly exemplified as here: “The valleys also shall stand so thick with corn that they shall laugh and sing.”

W. MAURICE ADAMS.



HOW WE MANAGED OUR BAZAAR.



THERE was not anything to individualise our bazaar from other fêtes of a similar nature often held for charitable purposes during the summer months in the grounds of country-houses; but by the time our arrangements were made and successfully carried out, we had picked up sundry pieces of experience and information, the possession of which *at starting* would materially have lightened our labour; and having then neither one nor the other, a

paper in CASSELL'S FAMILY MAGAZINE treating of fancy fairs would have been most welcome. It is to a desire to supply with a few hints any of our readers who may have such an undertaking ahead of them, by briefly describing how we managed ours, that this article owes its origin.

A bazaar in a town is a comparatively easy thing to get up, and has little enough excuse for not being a success. There will be a town-hall or other public building all ready for the purpose; the buyers (a very necessary item) are living close at hand, and whether it be wet or dry, can turn in for an hour or so in the afternoon or evening, make their purchases, and leave again; refreshments are therefore not absolutely necessary.

In the country, on the other hand, the weather is an autocratic master of the ceremonies. The principal purchasers are naturally to be looked for in the ranks

of the fair sex; but in ladies' dictionaries “bonnet” comes before “bazaar,” and should rain seem imminent, they will not, unless specially interested, drive in an open carriage, perhaps several miles, running the risk of spoiling their bonnets through having their feathers taken out of curl, or getting their velvet trimmings spotted, merely for the purpose of emptying their purses on things which, as a general rule, can *not* be classed among the necessaries of life. Attractions additional to the actual bazaar have to be provided, to draw the public from a distance and coax out their superfluous shillings; tents are a *sine quâ non*, a band ditto, and a public tea can scarcely be avoided. A refreshment-stall also is far from being unlikely to pay, for stuffy marquees are conducive to thirst, and suggestive of lemonade and ices; and a saffron bun is a capital bait for a rural appetite in quest of something nice.

Having obtained the consent of some charitably-disposed ladies to hold stalls of, say, the value of £50 each (ours ranged from £100 downwards), the next thing is to see about the tents. These we hired of the following dimensions:—

Bazaar tent	90 feet by 30 feet.
Entertainment do....	100 „ 30 „
Tea do.	60 „ 30 „
Refreshment do.	30 „ 15 „

The hire of the four, agreed upon beforehand, was £21. This being inclusive of fixing, we anticipated having no trouble about *them*; but, as a matter of fact, we found the man in charge had so few and incompetent hands to help him, and the work of erecting was progressing so slowly, that to expedite matters, on the afternoon before the event, we procured a contingent of our neighbours' gardeners, and deducted their hire from the estimate.