

"I tell you, Rosalind, that that girl has robbed me of my husband's love, and of nearly all your money. All his last words were for her—he never uttered my name; and I have toiled and slaved for him and for his children. I hate her! I hate that girl; and if I can help it, she shall not pass another day under this roof."

Rosalind tried to soothe her mother, who in her excitable condition seemed to be almost out of her mind, and in a few moments she regained her ordinary cold manner, and was ready to receive the condolences of the family on their loss. She disguised her hatred of Dulce most skilfully, for, as she reflected, the girl possessed more knowledge of her schemes and designs than was altogether agreeable to contemplate. And her engagement to Lord Melvell, though it had failed in bringing about her deeply laid scheme to enrich Norman Carruthers at someone else's expense, still placed her under a very powerful protector—one whom it would not be politic to offend. If the girl had been friendless it would have been a very different matter.

There were many things to arrange before the funeral, and Clifford Carruthers took the responsibility of everything on his own shoulders, and proved himself a most capable Lord Spenhouse. "*Le roi est mort! Vive le roi!*"

It gave him a spasm of pain to be greeted as "my lord" by the servants and employés of the house when the late lord was still lying upstairs in his coffin in the darkened room.

He had always cared more for his father than he had really known, for under his quiet exterior there lay hidden a depth of affection which chilling surroundings had failed to wake into life; so that his death was a real sorrow to him, as it was to Dulce.

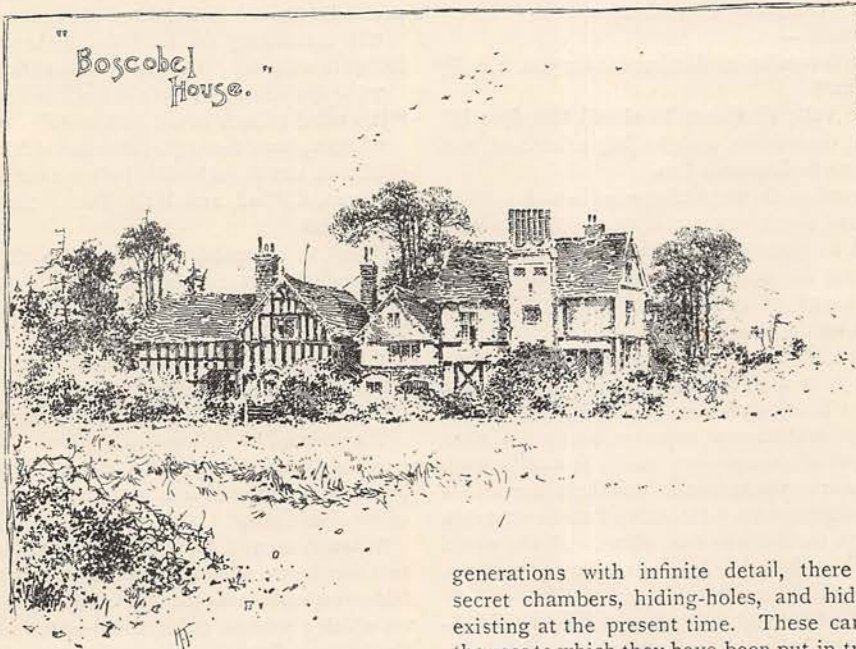
As the funeral was to take place at the country seat of the Carruthers family, he wrote to his brother Norman at Trelorn, giving him a brief account of affairs, and assuring him of his warm congratulations. He begged him, if his health would permit it, to be present with his eldest son at the funeral at Mere Dale Castle, for he considered it as quite necessary that a member of their branch of the family should be among the chief mourners.

Then, as there were many things to arrange and set in order, he went off to Mere Dale to stay till the following day, when he intended to return to make all arrangements for the funeral, bidding Dulce to take care of herself during his absence, and to be ready to greet him with a less haggard face on his return.

END OF CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FOURTH.

STRANGE FAMILY HISTORIES.

BY HENRY FRITH.—FIRST PAPER.



ALTHOUGH it is not necessary to suppose that there is a skeleton in every cupboard of our old houses and halls in England, there are many residences to which cling curious tradition and legend. Besides these long-established histories, narratives handed down for many

generations with infinite detail, there are actually secret chambers, hiding-holes, and hidden passages, existing at the present time. These can be seen, and the uses to which they have been put in troublous times can be explained.

We need not in this place go into the question of "haunted" houses. That several well-authenticated incidents have happened in which (supposed) visitors from the other world have taken prominent part, cannot be gainsaid. Shapes have been seen, noises have



been heard, which have puzzled even the sceptical, and while we doubt the evidence of our senses, we are compelled to acknowledge the extraordinary coincidences, and the exactness with which our impressions tally with those of others with whom we have had no personal communication.

Many of these legends, and particularly the stories connected with the secret panels, secret passages, and "hiding-holes," date from the Civil War, and the time of the Powder Plot. To take an instance of the former period, let us look at Boscobel House, which, equally with the ruined "Whiteladies," is memorable in the history of Charles II.

"Whiteladies" is a picturesque ruin; the few remaining walls are sheltered by thick ivy, but of the house—one of those "timbered" houses which we meet in Lancashire and Staffordshire—nought remains. Yet the Nunnery walls are of more ancient foundation than the house which has already passed away. The traces of the walls can be seen, but of the mansion to which Charles gladly fled after Worcester fight, there is not one stone standing on another.

Yet here, in this picturesque and pleasant spot, memories are green, and many representatives of those loyal partisans who assisted the king's flight may be found. Those bold landowners, the Penderells, the Yateses, the Giffards, and others, left descendants who will indicate the spots where Charles rested after his flight from Worcester.

On the morning of the 4th of September, 1651, Charles and his retinue came in hot haste to Whiteladies, where lived Humphry Penderell, who owned a mill. By his orders the royal fugitive was admitted, and concealed as much as possible from curious eyes. His horse was "stabled" in the hall for security's

sake. To this historic mansion came other Penderells to devise means for the king's escape.

Then Charles was disguised. All his decorations cast aside, his hair clipped short, his face stained brown, and, clad in country garb, who would recognise in this ungainly lad, this yokel, the King of England?

Away, away! the Roundhead cavalry is on his track. Come, mount with your trusty Penderells, my liege, and spur for leafy Boscobel, where in a secret chamber thou canst lie concealed!

But there is no time; the wood alone gave shelter from the rain that day, and when again the darkness fell he wandered off to Hobball Grange—a place which may still be seen—intending to reach Wales. But all the passages were strictly guarded, and after several adventures the king returned to Boscobel on September 6th, having been nearly four days tramping and hiding, by turns.

The Penderells of Boscobel can point with pride to their historic record. Dame Penderell and her sons were living there when Richard, who had stayed with Charles, went in to reconnoitre, and finding Colonel Carless of Broomhall there, brought in Charles to be hidden in the secret places of the house.

Now would you see old Boscobel? why then, go down to Staffordshire, and striking northwards from Wolverhampton, you will reach Brewood, and in its (formerly thick) recesses is the old house; fenced in with hedge and paling, surrounded by trees in the "bosky" shade which gives the pretty wood its name. The gables and great chimneys suggest hiding-places, and indeed the primary reason for the existence of the house was its seclusion, and its secret chambers.

But though no longer secluded, Boscobel House contains itself as it did in olden times. People may see the rooms, and hiding-places too, in which Charles and his adherents were concealed. One was off the bedroom, and it was gained by a secret panel and

trap-door. The hole in the attic chamber is that in which the colonel slept—or did not sleep—for it is small and inconvenient.

Two hiding-places still remain in this old timbered house so full of associations. We understand that everything is preserved by the present owner exactly as it used to be in Charles's days.

The place in which the royal fugitive took refuge is in a chimney, and from it a stairway leads through a secret door into the garden. From this the king escaped into the arbour, which is still in existence in fac-simile, and thence he departed to Moseley Hall, where another secret chamber may be seen.

The oak-tree with which the king's name is associated was a lopped tree, and has long since been appropriated by the memento-hunters; it had already ceased to exist when Charles was king. It is satisfactory to learn that he was not ungrateful to his friends the Penderells, for he provided for them richly. Richard, the king's companion, lies beneath the stones in the churchyard of St. Giles, London, once "in the Fields." The history of Boscobel would make a

charming narrative, but we cannot longer stay, and it is with regret that we turn away, and seek Hindlip Hall.

This house is not existent, but its traditions remain. The "picturesque and storied habitation" was turned into a school for young ladies, and finally pulled down, not many years ago. It was erected by John Abingdon, who honey-combed it with secret chambers, trap-doors, vaults, and passages. The chimneys were hollowed out, and hiding-places for seminary priests contrived. The capture of the Jesuits who were concerned in the Powder Plot, forms one of the most stirring chapters of the history of this house.

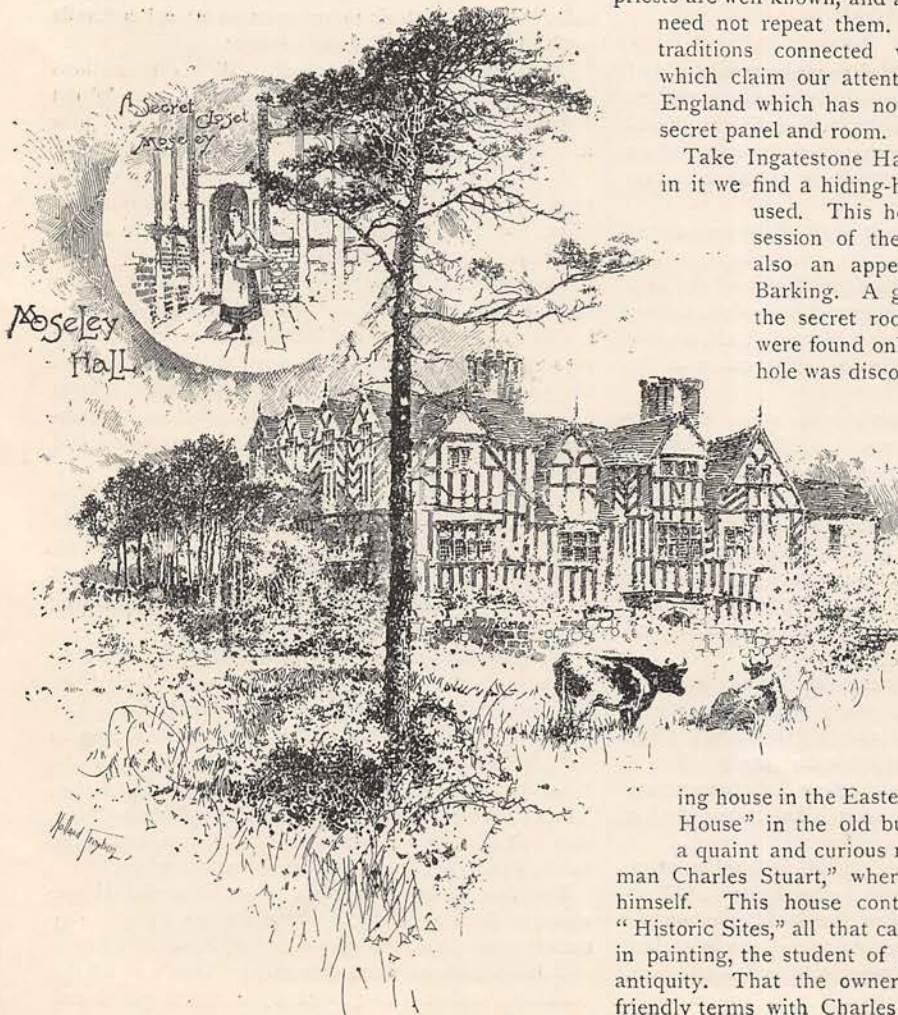
Mrs. Abingdon, the wife of Thomas, the owner in King James's reign, was sister of Lord Monteagle, and is supposed to have been the author of the famous letter which roused the king's suspicions. The priests' hiding-place was artfully contrived in the wooden border of the hearth, which was made to take up and put down like a trap-door. The bricks were taken out when the chamber was used; the opening was through the fireplace.

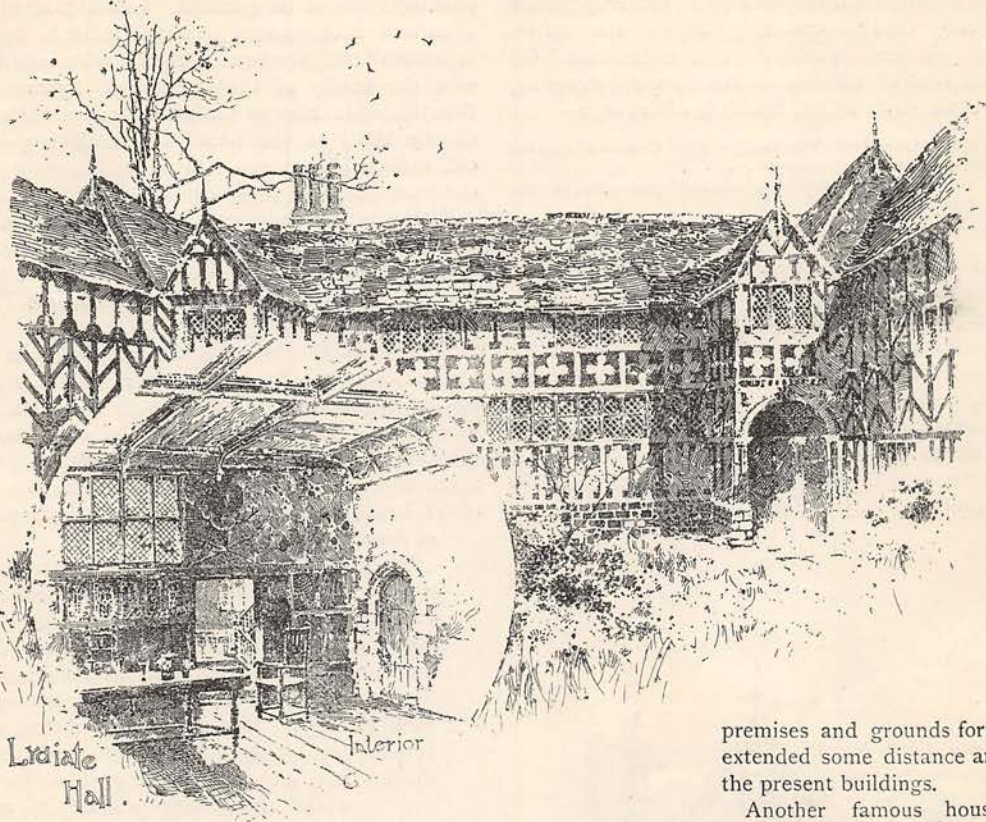
The incidents connected with the capture of the priests are well known, and are very dramatic; but we need not repeat them. There are many other traditions connected with existing residences which claim our attention; scarce a county in England which has not its hall or grange with secret panel and room.

Take Ingatestone Hall, which still exists, and in it we find a hiding-hole which has often been used. This house was formerly in possession of the Petre family, and was also an appendage of the Abbey of Barking. A gloomy record hangs over the secret room in which some bones were found only lately, when the hiding-hole was discovered. Access was gained

by a ladder through the trap-door in the corner of a bed-room; this is the only outlet, and thus in darkness the fugitive must have sat, crouching in fear, from dawn till dusk.

Perhaps the most interesting house in the Eastern counties is "Sparrowe's House" in the old butter-market of Ipswich—a quaint and curious relic of the days of "the man Charles Stuart," where he was fain to conceal himself. This house contains, says the author of "Historic Sites," all that can interest the connoisseur in painting, the student of genealogy, or the lover of antiquity. That the owners of this house were on friendly terms with Charles II. may not be doubted.





His portraits adorn the rooms, and on the exterior the royal arms are displayed. The outside of the house is unique in its decoration.

Within is an apartment—a secret chamber—in the upper storey of the house at the back. It possesses one small window, which is invisible from any other portion of the building. In the year 1801 this concealed loft was discovered by accident. A wall, or partition, had for years existed between the two apartments, where a sliding panel gave entrance. The relics found within the room seemed to indicate that it had been used either as a chapel or as an oratory, in which the priests concealed themselves. Charles II. is stated to have hidden here; and the possession of so many miniatures of the fugitive monarch by the family of the Sparrowes seems to point to the great probability of their having rendered him yeoman service, which he thus acknowledged. This house is well worth a visit. It has two storeys: on the first are four bay windows; the frontage is seventy feet; underneath each window is an allegorical figure of one of the four continents. A cornice above forms a promenade, and the attic windows are gabled. No chimneys are visible from the front. No doubt the carvings are emblematical.

It is not our province to describe the house in detail, but no more interesting historical relic remains in the Eastern counties than Sparrowe's House, whose

premises and grounds formerly extended some distance around the present buildings.

Another famous house is Lydiat Hall, in Lancashire,

about half-way between Liverpool and Southport. It is always an interesting and curious object to passers-by, "as ancient timbered houses of this description are rarely to be met with in the county of Lancashire," says our historian, the Rev. Thomas Gibson. This gentleman has written a most complete history of the hall, and to him and other antiquarians we are greatly indebted for our information respecting the secret chambers of the old house.

The mansion is built of timber framed in perpendicular, horizontal, and angular lines, "arranged in *quatre-foil* and other patterns." The interior is extremely interesting, though some portion of the house has been demolished. The old chapel, with which we are principally concerned, was enlarged in 1841, and in the course of the alterations it became necessary to pull down an intrusive chimney which arose from the hall. In this the workmen discovered a very curious "hiding-hole" contrived. The entrance was artfully concealed by a sliding panel. Unfortunately for the antiquarian, this aperture was not retained. The chimney had to come down to admit of alterations.

But we understand that the curious seeker will be gratified by the sight of another hiding-place amid the beams in the south wing of the mansion, some ten feet by four in dimensions. This apartment was discovered in 1863, and the bone of a chicken found within it. This at once indicated it as a secret hiding-place; and what speculations this small relic

of some solitary meal conjures up! We may picture the priestly fugitive crouching amidst the rafters while his pursuers hunted for him underneath. On this and kindred subjects we have a very interesting record in the diary of Mr. Blundell, of Crosby:—

"Aug. 13th (1715).—Henry Valentine, ye High Constable, searched here for horses, arms, and gunpowder . . ."

"Nov. 13th.—This house was twice searched by some foot as come from Liverpool . . ."

"Nov. 16th.—I set in a straight place for a fat man."

From this last entry the chronicler concludes "that Mr. Blundell must have been forced to have recourse to the hiding-place usual in Catholic houses at that time," but "contrived only for a lean curate." The entry is, however, capable of another interpretation—viz., a quizzical commentary upon the position occupied by the owner whose proclivities and antecedents rendered him liable to persecution and suspicion. He found himself "in a tight place," as our modern phrase is.

However this may be, the existence of the secret

chambers cannot be gainsaid. In addition to these, a curious subterranean passage existed from the mansion of the Norrises of Speke, who intermarried with the family of the owners of Lydiate. The Norrises were Roman Catholics, and in their house (Speke Hall) on the banks of the Mersey—a fine old timbered mansion—was a hiding-place which communicated with a passage leading to the river.

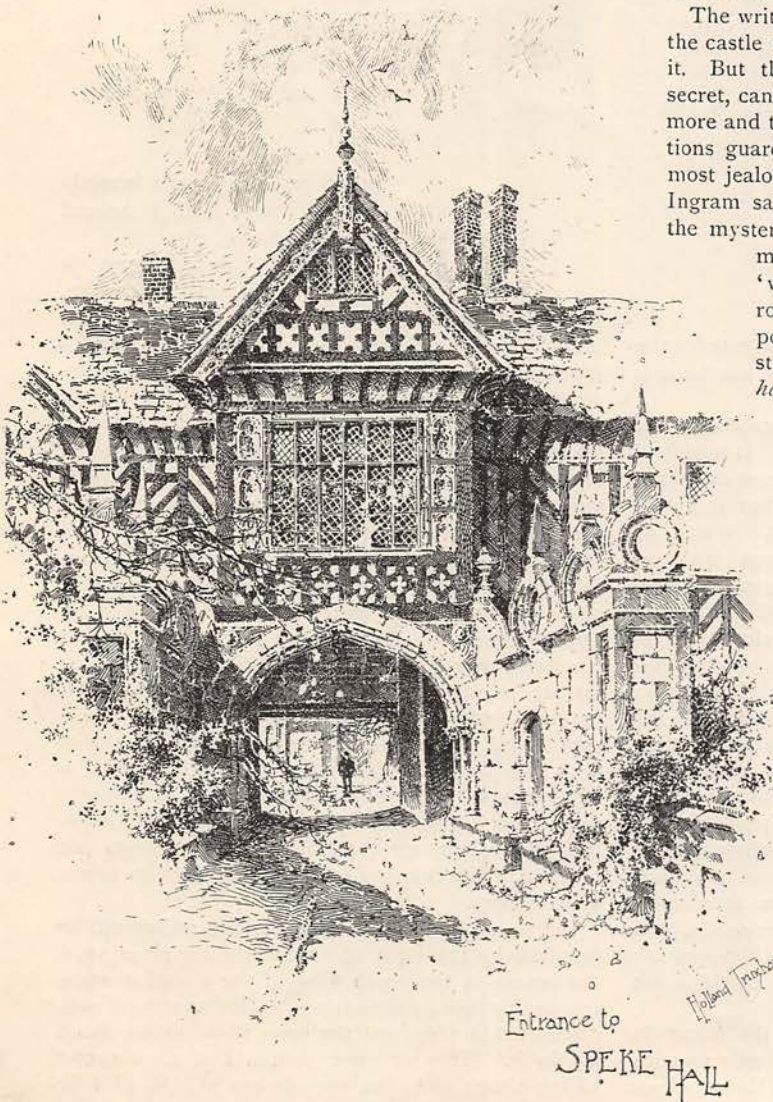
By this tunnel the suspected individual could make his escape and then take boat. The old mansion is a marvellous specimen of Elizabethan architecture. The hall contains some trophies carried from Flodden Field.

There is another secret and very mysterious chamber in Glamis Castle, and a tale is told that in this bricked-up room was incarcerated a human being. The actual position of the room is only known to the owner, to the heir of the property, and to the agent for the time being. Many attempts, we understand, have been made to ascertain the whereabouts of the room, but without success.

The writer has heard from a former guest at the castle the curious ghost tale appertaining to it. But that the room exists, and holds some secret, cannot be doubted. The Earls of Strathmore and their heirs have for successive generations guarded the secret—whatever it may be—most jealously. It is a curious fact that, as Mr. Ingram says, "gay gallants have made light of the mystery, and some have gone so far as to make after-dinner promises to tell the 'whole stupid story' in the smoking-room at night, as soon as he becomes possessed of the details. But notwithstanding all these brave airs, the *promise has never been kept.*"

No sooner does the heir attain his majority—when he has been initiated into the mysteries of the chamber—than he is quite as anxious to keep the secret as his predecessors have always been. Thus, the true secret has never been revealed, but tradition gives us a clue to the contents of the mysterious room in the old square tower of Glamis Castle.

The story goes that in days long past the feuds between Ogilvys and Lindsays were incessant, and on one occasion a number of the former clan sought refuge at Glamis. They were received within the walls, but carefully secured in an inner chamber, where the castellan barbarously let them remain and starve. The bodies were never removed, and there the bones remain, says our informant, the positions of some indicating the horrible sufferings which they underwent before dissolution.



Entrance to
SPEKE HALL

STRANGE FAMILY HISTORIES.

SECOND PAPER. BY HENRY FRITH.



IN connection with secret chambers and underground passages come legends and traditions of hidden treasure. There is hardly any class of narrative which appeals more powerfully to the general public than treasure-seeking, either in works of fiction or in fact. This desire for wealth has led to many curious

discoveries of long-concealed underground passages; and there is no doubt but that many such passages are still undiscovered.

Writers of romance have employed the secret chambers and secret panels, the underground passages and trap-doors, of our ancient castles and mansions to excellent purpose. Sir Walter Scott, in "Peveril of the Peak," gives us such an incident associated with the old manor-house of Swinton, and he states that few Scottish houses were without such contrivances as secret panels and concealed rooms. The underground passages were intended to keep up means of communication between castles and the outer world. We have seen it stated that nearly every important fortress in the Middle Ages had such a subterranean passage; and similar tunnels existed, or are said to have existed, between cathedrals and neighbouring abbeys or monasteries. Such an one is supposed to be in existence between Durham Cathedral and Finchale Abbey, and we read that several attempts have been made to penetrate into it.

It is related of one man who made serious efforts to unearth the treasure it may have contained, and to explore the tunnel, that an iron door after a while checked his progress. Still he seems to have seen something uncanny, or, at any rate, to have become very nervous; for he fainted. In all probability choke-damp seized him, and his fears supplied the details of horror he thought he saw.

"Over against the picturesque old town of Bridgnorth," says a writer, "are some caves in the sides of the ruddy sandstone cliffs overlooking the Severn." It seems that one of these caves was a hermitage, and in the floor thereof is the entrance to an underground passage, "which leads to a chest of buried treasure," thence going right under the Severn "to—no man can tell where for certain: not improbably to the castle." So much for tradition, which also assigns

secret passages to other localities, some of which have been found.

One of these exists at Buildwas Abbey, by the Severn. The passage was accidentally discovered by the sinking of the road above it as a waggon was passing over the roof of the tunnel. This opening was explored, and Mr. Dale says, in his paper on "Abbey Ruins," that he descended with a candle, and, after passing down a brick shaft some fifteen feet, he reached the tunnel. "It appeared about ten feet in height and four feet in width, formed of excellent squared masonry."

Lord Saye and Sele had a secret chamber and an underground passage at Broughton Castle. These houses, with hiding-holes such as we have described, with secret passages in the thicknesses of the walls, and immense chimneys, were specially adapted for the manifestations of so-called "ghosts" and restless spirits, who, or which, rapped, groaned, clanked chains, or otherwise annoyed the inmates, as set forth in the introduction to "Woodstock," a mansion which possessed unusual facilities for pranks of this nature. The tricks played upon the obnoxious Puritan soldiers were legion, and included such manifestations as rappings, explosions, the appearance of a mysterious animal like a dog, and a wholesale destruction of crockery and kitchen utensils.

The Parliamentary Commissioners were considerably alarmed, particularly when trenchers and buckets of slimy green water came flying down upon them; but all these marvels were accomplished by some roguish servants by means of a trap-door in the ceiling of the bedroom.

The secret chamber at Broughton Castle was retained for the deliberations of Lord Saye's adherents. They assembled in private, and in this hidden fashion held council; but, so far as we can now perceive, there was no special reason for this course on many occasions.

Nearly every county in England could supply a secret chamber in one or another of the mansions and castles. Harrowden, Raglan, White Webbs near Enfield, and Albourne Place in Sussex, are a few chosen at random from a long list. In the last-named house Bishop Juxon lay concealed, and the secret chamber was discovered accidentally. The entrance to it was through the adjacent chimney.

Frequently certain chambers in these houses are associated with ghosts, and some of the stories are so circumstantial as to be perfectly marvellous in their ingenuity. There is, for instance, the Walton Abbey ghost, which inhabits a certain "chamber wainscotted throughout with panelled oak, one of the panels forming a door so accurately fitted that it cannot be distinguished from the other panels. This sliding door is moved by a secret spring, and the aperture gives access to a stairway which conducts the visitor

to the moat." This, no doubt, was another of the secret hiding-places. It is haunted by the ghost of the lady to whom the mansion (it was originally a priory) belonged at the time of the Civil War. The Puritan soldiers "hewed her head off," killed her child, and plundered the house. Hence her "headless ghost" is supposed to haunt the room in which the deed was perpetrated after Marston Moor.

In Gloucestershire annals we read of a curious old house—now almost demolished—at Bourton-on-the-Water. While workmen were pulling down this structure, a door hitherto unsuspected was discovered on the landing upstairs. This door gave access to a small room furnished with a table and chair; and, says the writer in *Chambers's*, "On the back of the chair lay a black robe, and the whole room had the appearance as if some one had recently risen from the seat and left the room." There were other curious rooms, all supposed to be haunted. "One was called the chapel, the other the priests' room."

Sutton Place, in Surrey, is another old mansion in which relics of former occupants of secret chambers have been found. Knebworth, the seat of the Lyttons, had also its "mysterious chamber," but the portion of the house which contained it is no longer standing.

It was a peculiarity of some old Tudor houses to possess apertures in the halls in which arms and accoutrements were stored ready for use, or for purposes of concealment when search was made. Besides the above-mentioned, "Mr. Whitgreave's house at Moseley," and many other old halls, contain curiously devised hiding-places. Charles the Second was hidden at Moseley for a day or two after his removal from Boscobel.

In addition to these chambers, there are other historical and legendary apartments which contain an immense amount of interest for the curious and the antiquarian. Such an one is the room in Smithills Hall, Lancashire, which, we read in the *Bolton Journal*, is not easy of access, "as it lies at some distance from the road," but, once reached, affords a charming picture.

In this old house is a chapel, and in the passage leading to it is the print of a footprint in blood, which cannot by any means be obliterated. A plate bears the following inscription:—

"Footprint of the Rev. George Marsh, of Deane, Martyr, who was examined at Smithills, and burnt at Chester, in the reign of Queen Mary."

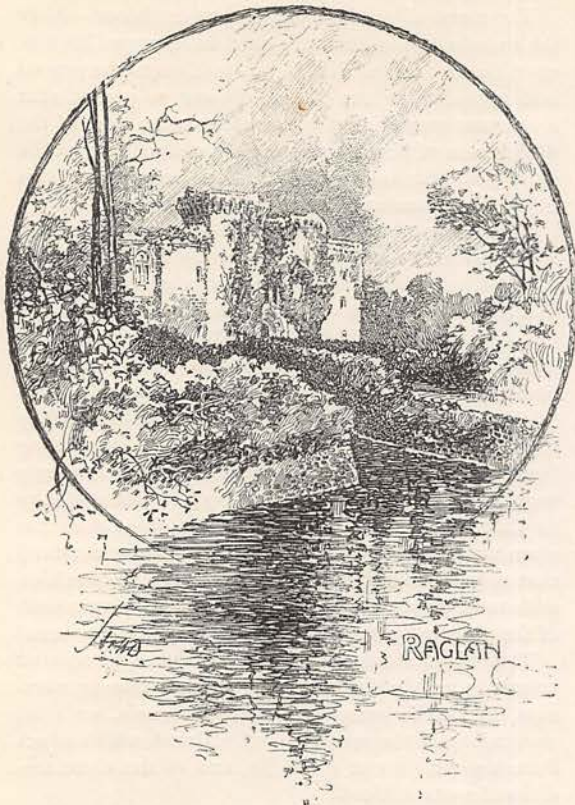
The cause of the footprint is thus explained—After the examination of the clergyman he stamped his foot upon the stones, and, looking up to Heaven, he prayed and appealed to the Divine Power to permit that a constant memorial of his condemnation and of the wickedness of his accusers might remain. So, as the story goes, the impress of his foot remains to this day. The mansion belongs to the Ainsworth family.

There is another chamber in a house also associated with a literary family, viz., Calverley Hall. Here is a room in which a terrible deed was done by one Walter Calverley in 1604, when he murdered his children. For this crime he was pressed to death at York, and an old servant who sat upon the great blocks to hasten his master's end was hanged for his fidelity. Calverley's ghost still haunts the house, they say, on horseback, and a man testifies to having been tormented by the spectre in a manner strongly suggestive of nightmare, which may have some affinity to Calverley's phantom steed. The ghost does not seem to appear frequently now, but we understand that so lately as 1874 an attempt was made to raise him, with some apparent success; but the near approach of the ghostly figure was not awaited by the "raisers."

The "Gilt Room" in Holland House is reputed haunted; and in the "History" of that famous mansion, by the Princess Marie Liechtenstein, we read particulars of the spectre, head in hand, which issues from a secret door at midnight, and of the three traditional spots of blood.

In Rushen Castle, Isle of Man, is a very secret and





secluded room, which has never been opened, so far as memory goes back, at any rate; and marvellous reasons are given by outsiders for its being so secluded. The people in charge do not seem to give any reason. Perhaps it is impossible to do so.

At Dinton Hall, in Buckinghamshire, we read of a secret chamber or hiding-place, "at the top of the house amid the rafters"; but at Denton Hall, in the North of England, we are informed there is a veritable ghost. From volumes of "Folk Lore" and Mr. Ingham's researches we collect the facts of this somewhat remarkable tradition and appearance. The old Hall is still standing, and a hundred years or so ago was occupied by "the famous Mrs. Montague." We also find that "history and tradition" indicate this spot as once occupied by "ministers of religion," and underground communications are assigned to it, as existing formerly "between the Hall and the Priory, so that the monks could pass without being seen by the public."

This well-known residence has its legend, which will be found in a "Table-book of Remarkable Occurrences." The lady who relates her experiences was about to retire for the night, when, on looking across the room, she saw the figure of an old lady in a flowered satin gown and hood. This elderly personage addressed her, lamenting the old days and the hospitality "which did not then ruin the

host." The young lady replied firmly; but the mysterious family visitor went on to hint at the speedy extinction of the spendthrift race at whose mansion the young lady had passed the evening with a large party.

"It is all hollow, hollow!" exclaimed the spectre. "All false! whited sepulchres, young lady; whited sepulchres!"

The young lady turned aside for a second or two, and when she again looked, the strange visitor had vanished. Astonished, and somewhat alarmed, the girl rushed to the door and found it locked still, as she had left it. Next morning she told the tale, expecting to be laughed at; but, to her further surprise, she found that her story was accepted as true, and "Silky," as the apparition is called, regarded as one of the family. She sometimes comes heralded by loud and unearthly noises; and comparatively lately she was heard dragging something through the unoccupied rooms. Visitors have frequently been alarmed, but the residents do not mind, or do not hear, these interruptions.



A CORNER
OF THE
OLD HALL AND CHAPEL
SMITH'S

The name "Silky" has been bestowed upon the mysterious old lady because of the rustling of her dress, which is plainly audible at times. The appearance of the old dame generally heralds some misfortune, and in the particular instance under notice her warnings came true. The great and lavish entertainers were dispossessed, and strangers are domiciled in the house where the young lady had been, and from which she had returned when she saw "Silky."

There is an old story connected with the house which accounts for the restlessness of the lady. She unfolded her sister's secrets and caused her death, demented; her punishment is visiting the visitors to Denton Hall.

We must not conclude these remarks without noticing a curious custom in several counties of keeping a skull in a certain place in a house—whether a "screaming skull" or not. These skulls are preserved in Burton Agnes Hall, in Yorkshire, and in other mansions. The removal of the skull will certainly, it is urged, bring misfortune as great as the breaking of the "luck" of Edenhall. The skull preserved at Burton Agnes keeps away ghosts, for no sooner is it temporarily removed as an experiment than the noises and rappings begin, and do not cease till the skull is restored to its place.

Sometimes there are luminous ghosts and appearances to warn the living. The illumination of Roslin Chapel is a widely known tradition, and is the subject of a ballad in "The Lay of the Last Minstrel." There are other illuminated places reported, and, as to the driving about of spectral carriages and horses, we need only say that they have been distinctly heard and mentioned. But one ghost story, at any rate, has a curious historical value. We mean the dream of the murder of Mr. Perceval by Bellingham, in 1812.

In the *Times* of August 16th, 1868, the facts were

set forth by a correspondent, while Mr. Williams, the gentleman who saw the vision, was alive, and witnesses to his narrative were also then living.

This gentleman, Mr. Williams, of Scorrier, near Redruth, on the night of May 11th, 1812, awoke his wife, and told her in great agitation that he had seen, in a dream, a man enter the lobby of the House of Commons, and fire a pistol at a gentleman whom he called the Chancellor, and whose appearance he minutely described. This dream was repeated twice again, and, as Mr. Williams was unable to sleep any more, he rose and dressed. Next day he informed many friends and acquaintances of his dreams. One friend to whom he related the vision, named Tucker, laughed at the idea of the Lord Chancellor being in the lobby of the House of Commons. But when Mr. Williams described the man, Mr. Tucker said: "Your description is exactly like Mr. Perceval, the Chancellor of the Exchequer"—a person whom Mr. Williams had never seen.

Even while they were discussing this matter, a son of Mr. Williams arrived from Truro, with the news that Mr. Perceval had been assassinated in the way described by Mr. Williams. The intelligence had just arrived by coach by a friend of Mr. Tucker, who had been in the lobby at the time. This is true and curious enough. But some weeks afterwards, when Mr. Williams was introduced into the House of Commons, he immediately and correctly pointed out the spot on which the murderer had stood, the position of the victim, and described with almost perfect accuracy the habiliments of both individuals.

These statements were never contradicted, as they might easily have been if incorrect; and the vision vouchsafed to Mr. Williams must be regarded as one of those inexplicable mysteries which occur at times to puzzle our finite understandings.

A T L A S T.

STAND prepared, I beg to state,
To give the vain malicious fiction
That ladies love to be too late,
Flat contradiction.

Weak persons of a certain sex,
That does not need explicit mention
Have made, with set design to vex,
This gross contention.

They say (what will they *not* maintain?
A cousin's bad, but oh! a brother!)
That, if we ever catch the train,
It is another.

They have a rude, provoking way
Of standing, coated, idly humming;

Then shouting at the stairs, "I say!
When *are* you coming?"

So now, to crush, with foot severe,
This spiteful fib with nothing in it,
I have myself been waiting here—
Well—quite a minute.

He comes at last—no blushes mount;
He does not stammer, pained and flurried:—
'Twas not, I hope, on *my* account
Your Highness hurried?

What's that? *Been waiting here since three,*
And just strolled round to seek the rover?—
Of course you throw the blame on me—
A man all over!

FREDERICK LANGBRIDGE.