

he had realised that the water was washing deep over every point of rock below them.

But he stood looking down at Elsie with a quiet reassuring smile on his face, certain that death was every moment approaching nearer to him, but anxious for nothing save that he might place the man she loved in safety at her side.

It was Savernake who answered for him, with a return of his easy composure now that help was within reach.

"Swim? why, of course he can, Miss Manners—like a fish! But as for myself, I am absolutely no use in the water, especially in a heavy sea; so let us get into safety at once."

And he shivered as the waves, lapping against the ridge of rock, splashed up against his foot.

Leslie, without a word, made himself into a ladder, and from his shoulders Savernake pulled himself up into the cleft, and received Elsie in turn from Mark's arms, holding her close to himself as they crouched down in the narrow place that was just big enough for *one* full-grown person, but scarcely for the two who were clinging for safety to its precarious foothold.

Leslie, with his back against the cliff, and his arms folded, stood beneath them, looking out to sea. He was wondering what death would be like.

Its shadow was very close to him now, and he breathed a prayer as the water washed up to his waist. Then, with the most complete self-mastery, he sent up a cheery word to his companions between the shouts for help which he every moment despatched ringing across the waste of water.

"Thank God!" he said at last, fervently. "Elsie, there is a boat coming round the point. They are waving to us—hold on, my darling, for a moment longer."

He seemed to be beside himself with relief, and Elsie, looking down upon him, saw as he turned towards her that his face was radiant with a new and noble light. He had given his life for his friends, and

now in the world there existed for him no one but the girl he loved.

For one brief moment she was his, and afterwards the golden gates of Paradise were opening for him.

His words rang through Elsie's brain, above the noise of the waves. What had he said? What had he done? He loved her—for he had called her "darling."

But at that moment she was blinded by a sheet of spray from a breaker that dashed triumphantly at the cliff; and when she looked again—he was gone!

"Mark! Mark!" she shrieked—"Oh, Mark, I love you!"

And darkness fell upon her, and she knew no more.

* * * * *

When Mark Leslie came to himself in the little parlour of the inn, he looked around him with bewildered eyes.

He did not at first realise that the boat had rescued him just as the wave flung him across its track. He only remembered the rock ledge, and the words that still rang in his ears—"Oh, Mark, I love you!"

What wonderful words they were—of course, the outcome of his highly-wrought brain, for it was absurd to think that Elsie, with Savernake at her side, could have ever thought of him, save in pity.

But as his eyes wandered round the room, they lighted on a figure with fair bended head, crouching near the end of the sofa, sobbing, with her face buried in her hands.

"Elsie?" he said, in a tone of dreamy surprise. "Are you glad that I am not drowned?"

He held out his weak hand, and with reverent fingers touched a stray lock that fell across her forehead. She looked up through her happy tears.

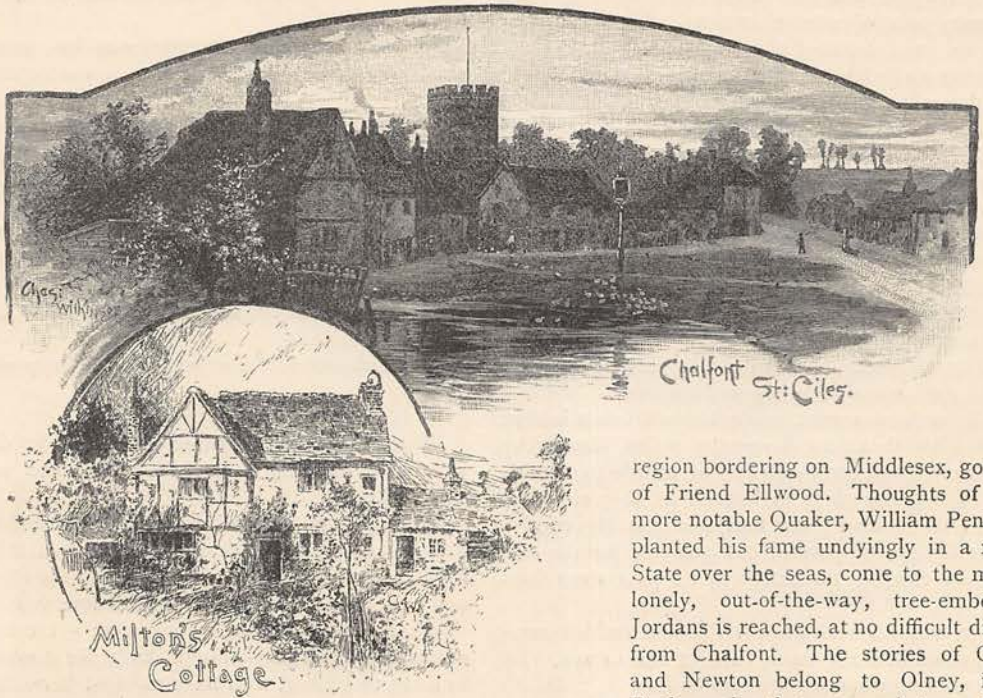
"Oh, Mark!" she whispered, "I have loved you ever since we parted that day in the Park, ten long years ago." And with a smothered cry he caught her to his heart.

NEW LANDS FOR LONDONERS.

THE persistent development of the St. John's Wood extension of the Metropolitan Railway promises soon to open up to dwellers in the great city a county of which in the majority of cases they know little. Buckinghamshire has hitherto been merely a name to many. It has had a certain admitted title to fame in the fact that it has given more than its share of Prime Ministers to the service of the State. People are aware that Lord Beaconsfield boasted of the circumstance, and set it as defence against the charge of agricultural stupidity. And for the rest, it was known that Bucks had its literary shrines—Milton's house at Chalfont

St. Giles for one—and that capital dairy produce was a speciality of the district round about its county town. But practical acquaintance with the shire remained very slight.

When the new line has its trains running regularly through the Missenden Valley into Aylesbury, and is in touch with sleepy branches beyond, transforming the sluggishness that came from lack of a direct outlet, this want of appreciation must pass away. It has been due to the long-continued isolation of sylvan Bucks. Whereas every artist and admirer of dainty "bits" of scenery has a familiar catalogue of the beauties of Surrey and of rural Sussex, few have

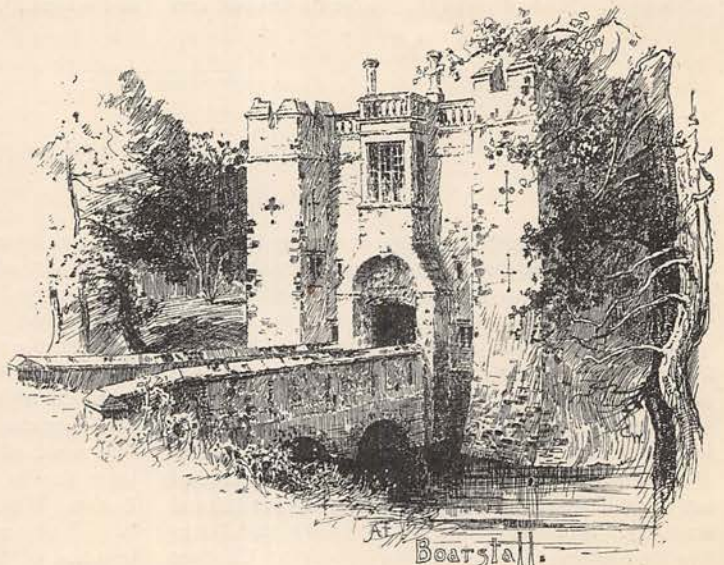


properly explored the shire of the great chalk downs that give their name to the Chiltern Hundreds, and incidentally afford the chance of appointment to an obsolete office to M.P.'s who wish to retire. There is much new ground to examine, and it cannot be doubted that pleasure and inspiration will be the result of a greater familiarity. Close at hand, convenient for a single day's outing or for many such days, here are indeed fresh roaming lands for jaded city prisoners.

Many tastes will be met in these easy tours. Those who care only for freedom and fresh air and the charm of wide sweeps of undulating country, with wood-crowned heights and meandering streams, can find exactly what they desire no farther out than Wendover. The man with the sketch-book may descend haphazard at any station and follow almost any road and obtain vistas of far distance and quaint twists of leafy lanes (in summer-time) and old-fashioned clusters of village houses for his blocks. And the wanderers who are glad to have pleasant scenes linked with noble associations will have their interest quickened on every hand. Bucks is peculiarly rich in historic memories, and the quiet and the loveliness of its sequestered valleys have been grateful to not a few eminent workers. The great poet of the Commonwealth has been mentioned. But with his name, in the

region bordering on Middlesex, goes that of Friend Ellwood. Thoughts of a still more notable Quaker, William Penn, who planted his fame undyingly in a mighty State over the seas, come to the mind as lonely, out-of-the-way, tree-embowered Jordans is reached, at no difficult distance from Chalfont. The stories of Cowper and Newton belong to Olney, in the Bucks wedge that runs up between Northampton and Bedfordshire. Percy Bysshe

Shelley and Mary Godwin were residing at West Marlow in 1817. Recollections of Waller, Edmund Burke, and Disraeli, of the "Curiosities of Literature," and of his brilliant son, cling to Beaconsfield. The lover of science will remember that Sir William Herschel is buried at Slough, and the politician that the acres on which obstinate John Hampden refused to pay ship-money are in Stoke Mandeville borders—the new line runs past—and that the patriot sleeps well after the turmoil of the momentous conflict in the church of

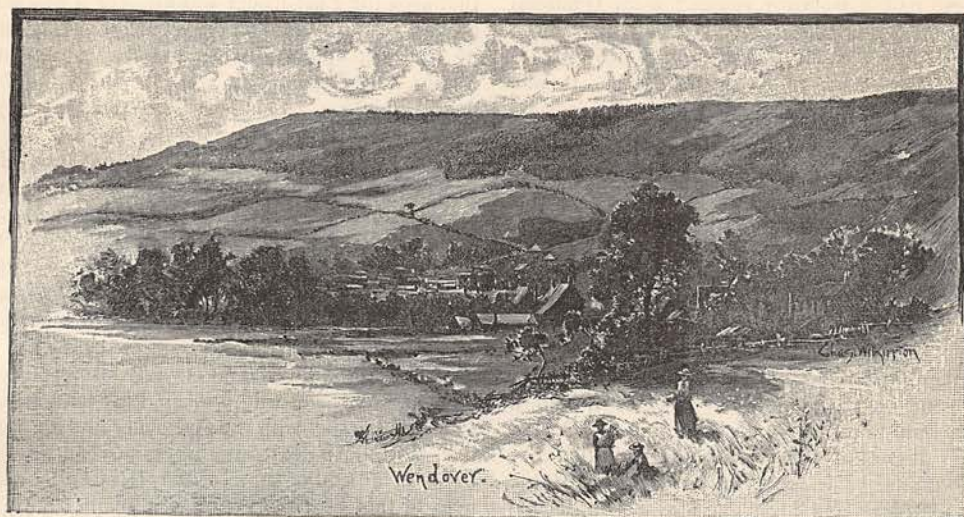


Great Hampden. But it is enough to show how varied and striking is the roll of notable Bucks names, and of notable Bucks events. The county has played its part in the making of England.

Londoners long for novelty, for excursions out of the beaten track, for glimpses of a panorama that custom has not staled. And very little more than an hour's run from Baker Street will set them down at Wendover, and behind the quaint, huddled, heterogeneous roofs rises the highest point of the Chilterns. A dark belt of woods, welcome to the eyes when it is a summer day of cloudless sky, sweeps round the summit and away out of sight beyond and dips to meet the climber. How steep the hill is, and how thick the carpet of leaves along the path. The drifted autumn glory of not one year only lies here dry, and

say, as in Mr. Punch's picture: "What a big sky you have here."

And round by Halton, the palatial building so much in evidence, are other downs, and dipping into the valley and mounting the wave-like crests of the Chilterns again to the south-west there is the great stretch of gorse-clad height frowning over Ellesborough and the two Kimbles. So soft and rich is the turf in the fair demesne of the fine old house not far from the crest—the Chequers—that all South and Mid-Bucks holiday-makers know it as Velvet Lawn. A flag-staff shoots up into the clear air, and countless are the picnic-parties that have toiled hard to reach it, and panted in the time of success, and turned to marvel and express delight at the view which opens up the wide extent of the Vale of Aylesbury. But at every summit,



soft and yielding to the foot. And the turf on the down above—where sheep are browsing—is short and springy and pleasant to tread likewise. A comfortable homestead, "Peacock Farm," peeps through the great tree-boles behind. But the stranger's gaze will not turn first in that direction. It will go out over the fair wide valley. Fields and meadows intersect each other with hopelessly irregular boundaries, like the careless ordered pieces of a child's puzzle. And many contrasted tints of green and brown are there, and as a low wind sways the grass or the unripened corn, subtle grades of colour come and go like changing lights of sea waves. It is unspeakably refreshing to eyes dulled through long months by the prose of sombre town streets and the cares that cling to ledgers and invoice sheets. And the roofs break the continuity, but destroy no beauty in the centre of the picture. They are not incongruous with the scene, oddly jumbled as they may be. Turn to the right, and a sparkling sheet of water reflects heaven's azure, and further yet is a great house, one of the many mansions of the Rothschilds.

Surely on these breezy hillsides the city arab might

and at many a bend and curve of this barrier of hills from Aston Clinton to Risborough, there is reward for a ramble and for a stiff pull up the brae.

Striking northward, a few more miles bring the traveller to Aylesbury, much more truly than many English county-towns the heart of the shire. People who live in the hamlets on Bucks heights, north and south, talk with just pride of the fatness and plenty of "the Vale." With its well-tilled fields and meads, where sleek cattle crop the luxuriant grass, with its well-stacked granaries and jovial-faced farmers, it resembles in some marked features those rich, corn-growing districts of the Lothians which are not much farther off from the Scottish capital than this is from the English.

Diving deeper into a land where the true English rustic is still to be found, holding fast to his traditions, and using a broad dialect humorously critical of change, many villages offer examples of the quaint, double-barrelled names so frequent in Bucks. We have Fleet Marston, and Nether Winchendon, and Wotton Underwood, and Steeple Claydon, and Drayton

Parslow. At the foot of a fine hill, in the centre of a rough circle which these names indicate to a native, is Waddesdon, a village found in mean estate and made into a modern model of village perfection. The zeal and liberality of Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild have effected the transformation. And Waddesdon Manor, built after the pattern of a chateau of the Loire, crowns the lofty crest beyond. The great park is a marvel of man's power to change the homely face of Nature. Deliberate, determined art has brought the beauty of copse and lawn and of swelling green pastures, where very recently were only ploughed fields. And once a year the Vale turns out and Waddesdon is like a fair, and visitors from far and near climb the slopes and revel in the view, and talk of the wonder of great trees transplanted bodily with tons of their mother earth and flourishing in their new home.

Another Bucks "foot" pushes out into Oxfordshire, to the west, and a tramway running from Quainton Road affords access. Here also are new lands for the *blasé* Londoner to explore, and quite worthy of his attention. The tram rails end at Brill. It was "generally received," says White Kennet, the learned Bishop of Peterborough, "that Brill was one of the seats of King Lud." This is surely a special title to the consideration of the inhabitants of the metropolis, for the semi-fabulous monarch is the mythical founder of their city. And Brill need not rely on tradition to attract. Most Bucks towns nestle in the valley, the builders choosing sites that were obscure and hidden from an observation that might have its dangers in wild times. This old-fashioned place breaks the rule and is defiantly planted on the table-land, an eyrie on a steep spur of the Chilterns, Charles I. had a garrison here in 1642, and John Hampden attacked it in the early days of civil strife. The hero in this case was unsuccessful. Edward the Confessor, King John, two of the Henrys, and imperious Thomas à Becket, are names that belong to the record of old Brill

Palace, now a few mounds and crumbling ruins. And the panorama from these hills of Brill, Ashendon, and Muswell can only be described as magnificent. There is a spot from which the eye can roam into nine counties. Boarstall, with its stories of ancient Bernwode Forest, and with its fortified mansion, fought for so bitterly centuries ago by Roundhead and Cavalier, is close by on the one side, and Dorton, once in some vogue for a Spa which was to rival Bath and Tunbridge Wells, but somehow never did, is as near on the other.

And what glories of flower and of foliage clothe the hedgerows and tempt to the woods on all these lines of road and rail. Devon itself can show no richer verdure, no more dainty carpet, no more delightful winding ways of living green, than half a day's jaunt into a real Bucks dale will reveal. Roses in lavish profusion, in huge thickets, and harebells, and scented thyme, and countless meadow blossoms: the pity is that soon the East-Enders will know of a new hunting-ground and will rifle the full hands of spring, and will be grubbing up every root that cheap fares can bring him to, and that he can make to yield a profit on a day's vandalism. There are drawbacks to every boon conferred on a class or on the multitude.

Once at Aylesbury there is communication with the superseded county town, named of the shire, and jealous to this day of its rival and supplanter. And from Buckingham it is not a far cry to stately Stowe, a noble house which the Queen once passed through Bucks to visit. The double-barrelled names are plentiful again hereabouts; and some of them are like echoes of old legend and remote conflict. Maids Moreton and Lillingstone Dayrell are instances, perhaps, in point. A wild, broken, hilly land it is which stretches parallel with the Aylesbury and Buckingham line, and darts out into a curious narrow tongue between a bend of more orderly Hertfordshire. The map of this central section is a map of dark, horse-shoe like curves, all of which mean rugged combs. But beauty and quaintness surround each rough crest, and every mile which the pedestrian may make, striking out from some minor station, will be worth, for health and enjoyment and sense of freedom, a half-dozen tramped-on lower levels.

In the straggling eastern corner just mentioned, and to be reached within two miles of Cheddington Station, is the bur-like hill of Ivinghoe and its old-world town which has shrunk to the dimensions of a village. It leisurely climbs the slope and curves round a breezy green and straggles down on the far side towards Pitstone. It is a place of idyllic peace, where Washington Irving might not unfitly have located his Rip van Winkle. But the calm and the exhilarating air and the sweet country scents, and the pleasant look-out to



the opposite heights of Dunstable, will have their charm for any escaped captive of city bustle and anxiety.

To return, briefly, to the first station of the new route within Bucks boundaries. An easy stroll from Chalfont Road brings the visitor to Chenies, where the Russell family are buried. The village is simply embowered in flowers in the summer-time. It is as much a model village as Waddesdon, and is too comfortably built and continually repaired to please some folk. In the old pre-railway days a coach ran through, and the fame of Chenies brought in the tourist one day with camera and intent to take the place right through. But on investigation he was disgusted and gave it up.

"I thought you had a real old English village," he said. A moss-grown congeries of thatched cottages and picturesque ruins was what he looked for. Chenies was too spick-and-span, even under its trailing wealth of blossom, to lead him to set up his tripod.

But Bucks has its tumble-down hamlets as well as its smart ones. It is a county of many contrasts; of plain people and of sturdy independence; of fair sylvan scenes and frowning uplands; of smiling valleys and lone woods—remnants of great forests. Perhaps chief of its charms for those who may now explore them will be their novelty.

W. J. L.



A QUAKER GIRL.

By GEORGE B. BURGIN.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-SECOND.

NOW for it!" says Gideon to his betrothed. "We will beard the lion in his den, the Doug—. But I beg your pardon. I must not speak of our future mother in this way."

"She is my mother already," says Bella; "but if you treat her in this disrespectful manner

I cannot guarantee that she will ever be yours."

It is Bella; but what a different Bella from the wan pale girl weeping in the summer-house for the lover she thought never to see again. Her cheeks are rosy with health and delight. Happiness is a great beautifier, and Bella has been very happy lately. It has been impossible to break the news to Mrs. Lockwood. She has been travelling about for some time under the delusion that her health has sustained a severe shock, owing to Bella's undutiful conduct in not admiring Holcroft. That Holcroft does not admire Bella is only a minor detail. Bella ought to have made him admire her. The day after Gideon's return to his

ancestral halls, her state of mind might have been aptly described as dangerous. She sat in her boudoir, and added up the butcher's bill with the air of a martyr at the stake. She discovered that they must immediately retrench, and, as the most practical way of putting this reform into execution, started off the same afternoon for Homburg, thinking that Bella, if left in solitude, might come to her senses. Bella saw her off at the station, and then returned to dream of Gideon. They had constantly met since the eventful evening of their *rencontre* in the summer-house. Gideon had taken her down to Geddes Hall, and formally introduced her to his relations. He did not condescend to give any explanations as to how the engagement had come about, but simply asked them to consider it as an accomplished fact. Bella was so sweet and winning to her new friends that she stole into their hearts with incredible rapidity. Dorothy was too much engaged in nursing Miss Melmerby to have very much time to spend with Gideon and his betrothed, but at length Bella helped her in the sick room, and then Miss Melmerby (Miss Melmerby was rapidly recovering) took a great liking to the happy girl. Not that her