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[PRICE ONE PENNY.

A LITTLE OUTING FOR LONDONERS.

PART I.

SOME time back the Bishop of London advised those who were taking holidays, and who could only spare a few days and afford a small sum of money, to make short tours to places in their own neighbourhood rather than to expend both time and money in taking long journeys to distant localities; this advice is wise and economical, and will, we hope, be largely acted upon. It has always struck us that people attempt to do far too much and

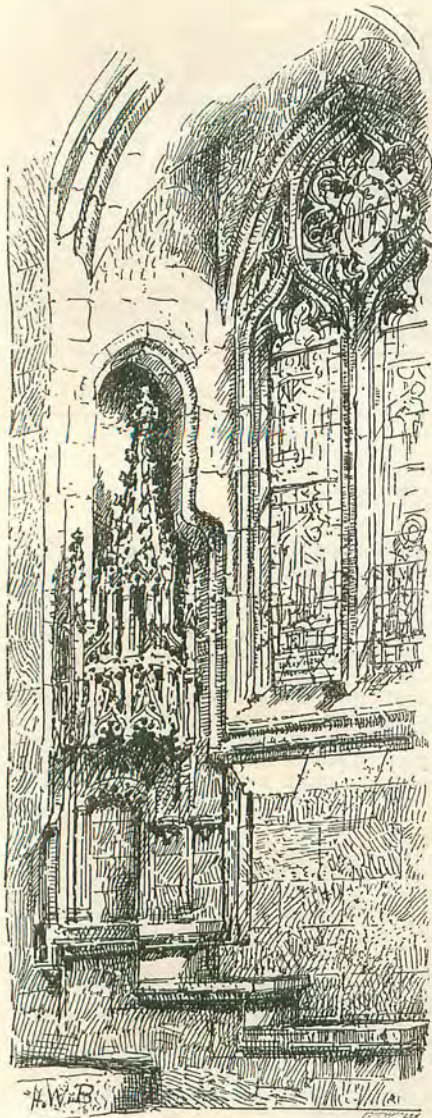
consequently either don't do it at all, or do it badly! They "rush" their holidays and obtain from them neither health nor intellectual enjoyment; this has led to the saying of a modern writer of a cynical turn of mind, "Life would be endurable but for its holidays!" Who has not met the man or woman who proposes to take a week's holiday and produces a list as long as your arm of places he intends visiting? if the plan be carried out one knows that the result will be a wearied body and a jaded mind! Yet if the person in

question would but follow the good Bishop's advice, the body would be refreshed and the mind delighted. Why not, instead of attempting to do some foreign land, run down to inspect the pretty country within twenty or thirty miles of London? for there is sweet country within twenty miles of the metropolis, landscapes which are in their way as delightful as anything in Europe; there are bright, sparkling streams, noble old trees, dense woods, peaceful old villages, homesteads, interesting ancient churches with architecture dating back



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THE OLD PALACE AND CHURCH, HATFIELD.



PISCINA, WHEATHAMPSTEAD CHURCH.

as far as any in Europe, noble old mansions, with such gardens as can be seen in no other land in the world! Take, for instance, the beautiful county of Hertfordshire, one of the most unaltered and least built-over, of any in England, yet how little it is known to the ordinary Londoner! so much so that many of my London friends laugh at my enthusiasm for this county and think I am a bit of a monomaniac; yet I have found men who are as much struck by its sylvan beauties as I am myself.

One day I was returning from a little run down to look up a portion of my favourite district and I got into the railway train to return home; I sat by the window and looked out at the lovely valley with a clear, shining brook forcing its way along between its wood-clad banks. A tall, thin gentlemanly-looking man sat opposite to me who was also looking out of window; soon he addressed me in unmistakable American accents.

"You are a lover of nature, sir?"

"Yes," said I, "and I am remarkably fond of the country hereabouts!"

"You are right, sir, nature here is all smiles; her tears are pathetic, and her frowns terrific, but give me her smiles. I have been trotting about all over Europe for the last three years; I have seen your Alps, your Rhine, your Norway, but, sir, we have bigger mountains,

nobler rivers, larger lakes, and vaster plains than you can show in Europe, but" (sweeping his hand across the window) "we ain't got this nohow. These pretty little valleys, these quaint old villages and ancient churches, these ruddy, tree-shaded ancestral homes are not to be found in 'the States,' and they delight me more than anything I have seen on this side, and if I had to fix up a location in Europe, I should like it in this country we are now passing through; it brings to my mind the Pilgrim Fathers and the kind of homes they must have left to set up in the New World."

I asked my friend whether he had met others of his countrymen who held these views?

"Yes," said he, "many Americans like the scenery round London better than any in Europe. Of course it isn't grand or big, but it's first class home-wear."

And I do not think it could be more perfectly described; it is just the kind of scenery that one would like to live amidst; then it is so easily reached. A good walker will find it an excellent field for exercise; almost every place has two or three ways of getting to it without keeping to the high roads, and these field-paths and shady lanes are sequestered and delightful, though there is a slight danger of missing one's way, as guide-posts are not so plentiful as they might be, and to meet anyone is a rare event unless you are near some town or village, so that if you are desirous of saving time it is better to keep to the high road than attempt a "short cut" over the fields. I know no county which is so little enclosed or rather "blocked," and in this respect it is a contrast to Norfolk, where you can't leave the high road without hearing some big fellow roar out at you, "Oi say t'gether, do ye know yer a traspusin bo?"

In Hertfordshire, however, the roads are so pretty that one scarcely feels inclined to leave them for the pathway, so do not let cyclists be frightened. Moreover, the roads are generally excellently made, and probably there is no grander "run" in England than the high road from Welwyn to Stevenage.

All the approaches to Hertfordshire from the metropolis are pretty, from Pinner Station, London and North Western Railway, and Metropolitan by the old Watford road is delightful, passing Pinner Wood and Hamper Mill. The Rickmansworth road is less interesting but a better track for the cycle. Watford is a pretty old country town, and there are charming walks through Cassiobury Park and along the banks of the Gade to King's Langley. Cycles are not allowed in Cassiobury Park, but there is a good road from Watford. King's Langley is a pretty old town of historic interest, as there was a royal palace here of which there are still scanty remains; one of the daughters of Edward III. was born here, and is buried in the church beneath a handsome monument which has been restored by Her Majesty. Abbots Langley church two miles off has architectural features which will interest the archaeologist, especially the Norman arches of the interior.

If other roads are taken, those through Edgware and Elstree, or through Stanmore, offer fine panoramic views of the county. The first glimpse of Hertfordshire from Stanmore Common is a delightful prospect; from Barnet through Hadley or South Mimms are also attractive. Of course everyone must visit Hatfield, not only on account of the beauty of its site, but also for its historical interest, which is concentrated round the "old palace" where Princess Elizabeth was residing when she was called to the throne. It is sometimes stated that she was imprisoned here, but Clutterbuck, who wrote a careful and excellent history of Hertfordshire, seems to represent Elizabeth's sojourn at Hatfield as a more agreeable episode. Moreover, Elizabeth was exceedingly fond of

hunting and field sports, which she seems to have indulged in to a great extent at Hatfield. The palace was Elizabeth's own house, as it had been given her by Edward VI., and the governor of the Princess here was the charitable and learned Sir Thomas Pope, the founder of Trinity College, Oxford, and for a time Lord Mayor of London. The old palace, of which the entrance court and great hall still exist between the church and Lord Salisbury's splendid mansion, belonged in early times to the monks of Ely, and was rebuilt by Cardinal Morton, Prime Minister to Henry VII., who is described by More in the "Utopia" as "not less venerable for his wisdom and virtues than the high character he bore."

Henry VIII. managed to get hold of Hatfield by one of those "ecclesiastical exchanges" at which he was such a skilful hand. Later on James I. exchanged Hatfield for Theobalds with Robert Cecil, and then it became the property of the Salisbury family. To our present taste Cecil got the best of the bargain, for the beautiful site of Hatfield on its breezy hill and fine distant views is preferable in every way to the flat marshy surroundings of Theobalds. But James I. was too canny to have made a bad exchange, and no doubt the magnificent house which Cecil had erected at Theobalds, with its colonnades, fountains, lakes, and superb gardens, were more to James's taste than the quaint, semi-monastic old palace at Hatfield. Of course then the palace alone existed; the magnificent mansion called Hatfield House was not commenced, as it was entirely Cecil's work, and has had the good fortune to remain unaltered as he left it. It would be absurd here to attempt any description of Hatfield House, as it has so often been described and illustrated that such a task would be superfluous. Close to the old palace stands Hatfield Church, or as it was formerly called, "St. Etheldreda's Church, Bishop's Hatfield;" it is an interesting edifice, chiefly dating from the fourteenth century, with a well-proportioned tower crowned by a lead spire. This spire, I fancy, is not original, and probably replaced the old Hertford "spike" or dwarf spire in the seventeenth century. Attached to the north side of the chancel is the Cecil chapel erected by the second Earl of Salisbury in memory of his father, and containing his monument. The chapel is a fair example of Jacobean Gothic, but the monument is quite Italian in character, and is proved by documents preserved at Hatfield to have been the work of Symon Basyll, the predecessor of Inigo Jones as controller of the King's works.* I am inclined, however, to think that some of the statues adorning it are of Italian workmanship. There is a curious note alluding to Basyll's estimate for the monument to the effect that if the figures were to be of correct proportions, they would be worth £60 each, and models would be prepared. The figure of justice? is a very fine one. These statues are life-size; the effigy of the Earl measures only 5 feet 2 inches, but it is known that Elizabeth used to call him her "pigmy," her little man, etc., by no means to his satisfaction.

Those who visit Hatfield by cycle had better leave their machine at the railway station or at the Salisbury Arms, as the town is very steep and the streets run up and down in an uncomfortable but exceedingly picturesque manner. Hatfield is a very convenient place to make short excursions from, as the roads are good and the villages not far apart; the inns are comfortable so that the pedestrian, the rider, and the cyclist are well off; I have always found the people obliging and polite and the charges moderate. A good map is quite indispensable, and a pocket compass advisable. There is a good service of railways

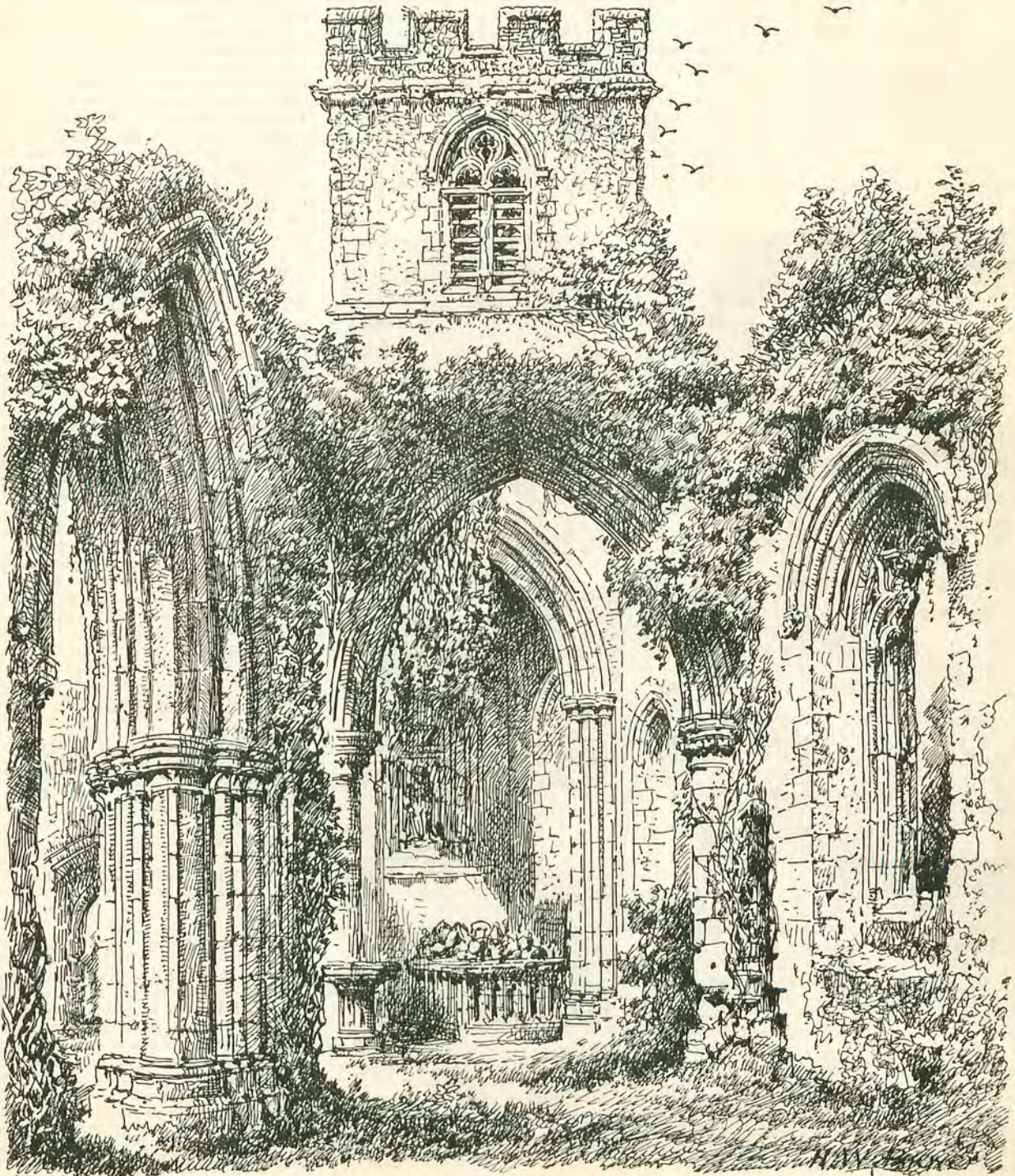
* *English Studies* by the late Rev. J. S. Brewer.

with stations not too far apart. There is a pleasant road to Ayot, the village with its new church is not interesting architecturally. Ayot St. Peter's is about a mile further on. The church here stands in an exposed and rather desolate situation; it is a tiny brick building; formerly the place was more important and bore the appellation of Ayot Montfitchet. Chauncey, the local historian, from whose history of Hertfordshire all more modern writers have borrowed, was vicar here. Chauncey was great nephew of that Chauncey who has left us such a graphic description of the declining days of the London Charterhouse, a valuable contribution to the history of the

Reformation period. So historical studies seem to have gone in the family.

A run of about two miles through pleasant, well-shaded lanes, takes one to the very interesting ancient village of Great Ayot or Ayot St. Lawrence; its situation surrounded and overshadowed by lofty elms is extremely pretty, and the little row of old gabled timber houses flanking the south side of its street are quite the perfection of village architecture. The old sign of the "three horseshoes" is a charming example of ancient metal work; the house was probably an inn in former times, but is so no longer. The opposite side of the street is occupied by a low wall, beyond which is the

old churchyard. The church itself is a picturesque ruin; the roofless walls and tower clothed with ivy and creeping plants, but peeping through the ivy are delicately-traceried fourteenth century windows, graceful arches and richly clustered columns, such as are rarely met with in ordinary village churches. The west doorway has elegantly carved leaves running along its mouldings; if you look beneath the ivy which quite covers the east window, you will find the remains of elaborate little niches which seem to have surrounded it. Beneath the tower is a fine Gothic monument bearing the effigies of a knight in full armour and his lady, and on the wall above a tablet



RUINS OF CHURCH AYOT ST. LAWRENCE.

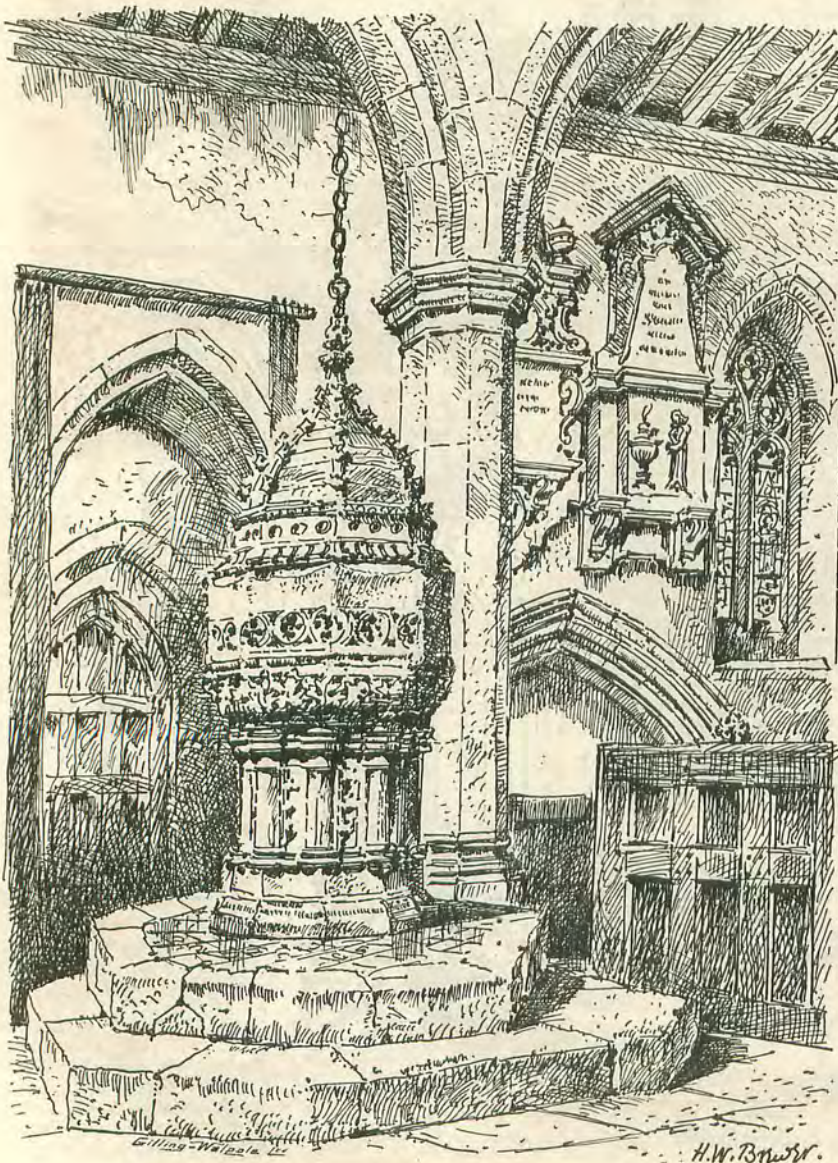
adorned with fragments of numerous figures. If we turn to Clutterbuck we shall find related in his pages circumstances which account for the elaboration and care bestowed upon this little village church. In the reign of Edward I. the manor was the property of a wealthy and powerful baron named William de Ayot, and from early times the church was connected with three wealthy and powerful abbeys—St. Albans, Westminster and Walden. A chapel attached to the church belonged to the Bristow family. The fine Gothic monument in the tower is that of Sir John Barre, lord of the manor of Ayot in the time of Edward IV. Barre was father of Isabella, Countess of Devonshire. The monument against the tower wall is that of Nicholas Bristow, his wife, six sons and seven daughters, 1626; Clutterbuck says there was another remarkably fine tomb to the Bristow family, but it had been destroyed. Adjoining the churchyard is a fine old Queen Anne mansion surrounded by beautiful gardens and plantations, in front of which is a large park-like field commanding a somewhat extensive view of the surrounding country; like most other Hertfordshire open spaces, it is free to the public and has a well-kept footpath across it

which leads direct to the modern parish church, a curious building erected at the end of the last century; in form it is like a small Greek temple of the Doric order. The portico is made to look more important by extended colonnades which conceal the bare sides of the building and connect it with two mausolea, one containing the monument of Sir Lionel Lyde, who died June 22nd, 1791, and the other that of his son of the same name, whose decease took place in the year 1814. I need scarcely observe that the effect of this singular structure is not only thoroughly uneclesiastical but exceedingly un-English, yet I must acknowledge that it is by no means inartistic; the open colonnades over which a gigantic wisteria flings its knotted and gnarled branches, the carefully kept and lovely flower garden in front, and the background of dark cypress trees make up a remarkably striking picture and more like a bit of Greek effect than anything I know in this country.

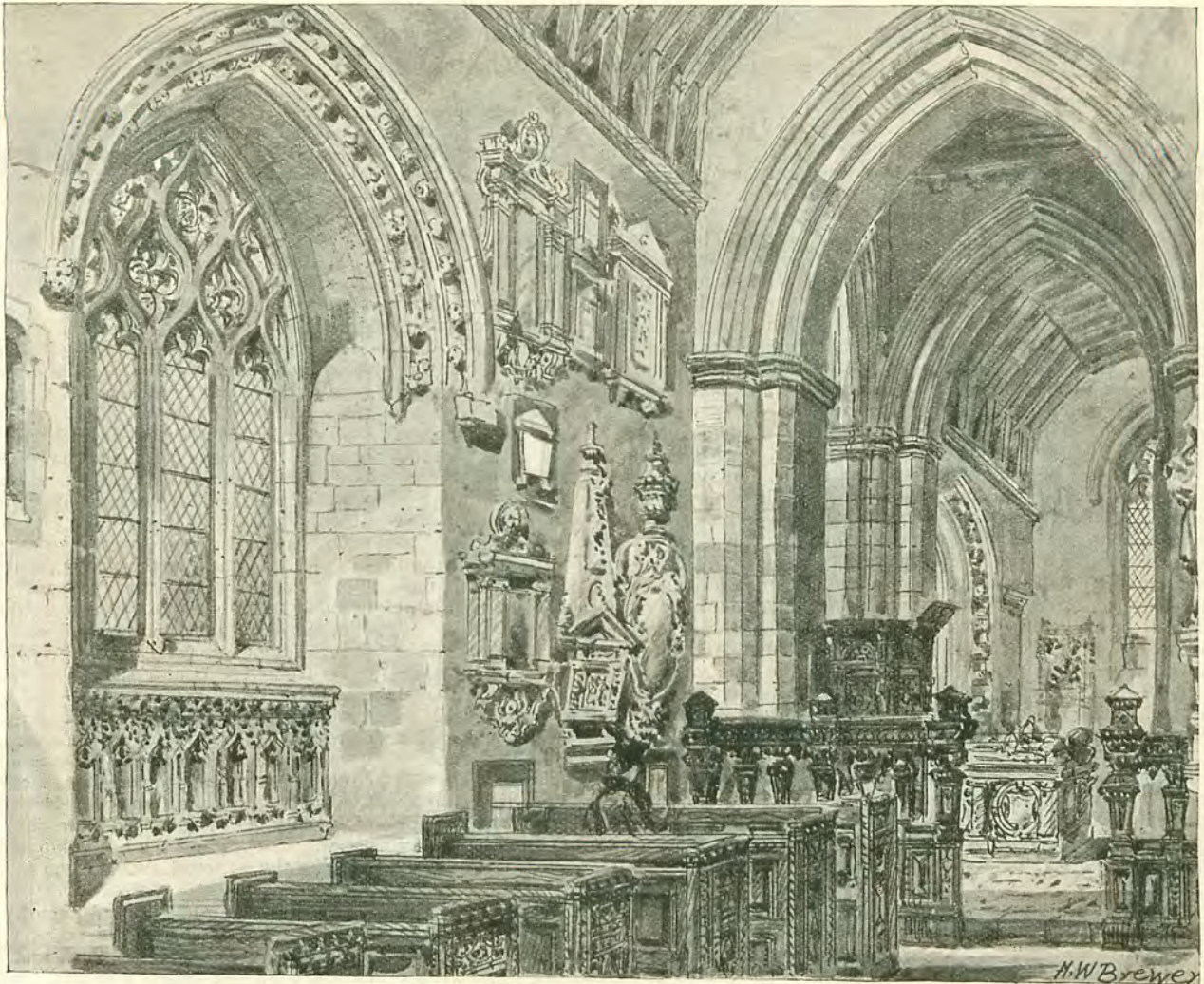
Quitting this charming village by the footpath across the fields we find ourselves in the extensive park of Lamer, a very ancient demesne which takes its name from Sir Pontius Lamer, Lord of the Manor, in time

of Henry III. In later days the estate passed into the hands of Sir John Roche, who was committed to the Tower for opposing Henry VIII.'s so-called "benevolence." Sir J. Roche had issue one daughter, Grizell, who married Sir John Boteler. The Botelers sold Lamer to Sir William Garrard of Sittingbourne who was Lord Mayor of London in 1653. Unfortunately the old mansion was rebuilt at the commencement of this century and is quite uninteresting. Cyclists cannot pass through the park and must keep to the road, where we shall meet them again outside Lamer Park, at the top of a steep hill which descends to the pretty village of Wheathampstead on the banks of the River Lea. Look out for the cycle, as the descent is somewhat sudden near the railway arch.

Wheathampstead is a very interesting old village (should it be called a town?); it has a good high street with old houses and two inns, The Bull and The Bell, at either of which a good homely meal can be obtained, wholesome, clean, and well cooked, but, of course, plain. The Lea runs through the village beneath a genuine mediæval bridge. The views of Wheathampstead from the banks of the river are very picturesque; the old bridge, gabled houses and gardens, with the fine church rising over everything is a pretty picture. The church dedicated to St. Helen, and situated in the middle of the village, is a beautiful structure, in form like a small cathedral, as it is cruciform and has a central tower crowned with a peculiar spire; the latter has been restored, and I am in doubt how far it follows the ancient model, but the building is one of great interest on account of its rich Gothic windows; be sure to see the interior, as it is full of curious objects of art. The font is a beautiful one, dating from the end of the thirteenth century, adorned with excellent carvings and standing upon a raised floor of ancient encaustic tiles. The transepts are screened off with low screens of the time of Charles I. The walls and floors are covered with monuments and the benches carved with arabesques; beneath the east window of the north transept is a beautifully carved reredos of seven niches; the figures are gone, but the carved foliage with which every portion is adorned is as fine as any work I have seen, and shows what admirable stone carvers must have lived in this neighbourhood in the fourteenth century; on the floor are several good brasses to the Bostocks and the Bocketts. The north transept contains an alabaster altar tomb with finely-carved effigies and large shields all round the tomb; it was erected to the memory of Sir John Bockett, his wife, ten sons and three daughters. The lady died in the year 1500, and from the architectural ornaments the monument probably dates from the reign of Henry VIII. There is a fine piscina in the south wall not far from this monument, and a singularly elegant one in the chancel, which is represented on page 434. The church is remarkably rich in more modern monuments, some of which are by no means contemptible works of art. The most important, though not the best in design, is to Sir John Garrard, 1686. The epitaph informs us that his wife was a daughter of Sir Moulton Lambard by whom he had twenty-three children, seventeen of whom survived him. It is said, "she was a most loving and prudent wife, the best of mothers and highly exemplary for piety and devotion." They say "practice makes perfect," and certainly this good lady had plenty of experience as a mother. Another member of the Garrard family had fourteen children. Sir Samuel Garrard was Lord Mayor of London in 1710, and a second Sir Samuel served with Marlborough. Near at hand is the curious old monument to Sir Y. Hayworth, 1558,



FONT, WHEATHAMPSTEAD.



TRANSEPT, WHEATHAMPSTEAD CHURCH.

whose children all died young, and he adopted Margaret Hoo. "The ways of Providence are indeed mysterious," but as Thomas á Kempis says—

"If His ways were not inscrutable,
He would not be God."

The church of Wheathampstead is certainly one of the most interesting village churches in the country and deserves to be carefully studied.

A very pretty walk, or an equally attractive cycle track from Ayot (about three miles) leads to Welwyn. The town contains nothing remarkable, but the scenery is most romantic and beautiful. The bright and rapid river Mimeran flows through the town; which is so full of fine trees that at a short distance it looks like a park, lofty wood-clad hills surround it on every side. The church is partly old, but possesses none of that delicate and refined detail which we have noticed at Ayot and Wheathampstead. In the Middle Ages "Welwyn," "Welves," or "Welge," for it was spelt all three ways, was a place of little importance. Domesday Book informs us that it "had panage for 50 hogs, and the whole is valued at twenty-five shillings." If this included the hogs it was surely a very low estimate.

The railway station is nearly two miles from the village and is an uphill pull, as the latter is in a deep valley and the former on the top of a hill about two hundred feet above it.

The view, however, from the line just before reaching the station is simply lovely. It presents a sweet prospect over Digwell and Tewin; the brisk little river Miran or Mimeran, is seen winding its course in the deep valley between richly wooded hills, with here a meadow, and there a park, bordering its banks. A great breezy stretch of undulating country with little villages peeping up here and there, noble old trees and country houses with well-kept gardens between, the whole presents a scene so peaceful, so charming and so English that one wonders why our countrymen always take their holidays abroad. Of course this view is only seen by those who approach Welwyn by rail; but the pedestrian and cyclist may enjoy a prospect of a different character, but very striking in its way. If we leave Welwyn by the Carlisle road, a hard pull of about a quarter of a mile, but leading to a splendid run of high road (level it is said with the cross of St. Paul's Cathedral), the view is very extended, and many villages, amongst others, Datchwirth and Walton are seen in the distance.

There is a fine road which leads direct to Stevenage passing Knebworth Station. It may not be a useless hint to our cyclist that the landlady of the Railway Arms knows how to provide a grilled chop. An accomplishment not too common in the country, where as a rule the frying-pan is regarded with more favour than the grid-iron.

A fairly good road leads from the station to Knebworth House; the distance is about two miles, the park at Knebworth is fine, but from the place being uninhabited looks rather desolate; the same may be said about the house, a modern structure, but striking from the number of copper-domed turrets. The old house of the Lyttons was pulled down in 1811, but some fragments of sculpture appear to have been incorporated in the modern one. The curious old church is near the house; it retains features of early Norman architecture, a richly carved Elizabethan pulpit, and some bench ends which look like Norman work; they are very rude and cut with the axe out of solid logs of oak, I believe them to be the earliest church benches in England, and are a great curiosity; most of the benches, however, are fifteenth century work. The north of the chancel is full of monuments to the Lyttons and their family connections; they are mostly of the "periwig" and "pig-tail" period, and possess little merit from an artistic point of view, though no doubt they were costly enough. A short distance from the churchyard is the mausoleum of the Bulwer-Lyttons with an epitaph to Lady Bulwer Lytton Bulwer and Lord Lytton the popular Ambassador of France; the memorial is not appropriate to its surroundings, and would suit a metropolitan cemetery better than the pleasant Hertfordshire scenery.

(To be concluded.)



THE VILLAGE OF ST. IPPOLYTE.

"WHEN SUMMER COMES AGAIN."

By S. E. WALLER.

THE children looking upward, saw the swallows' homeward flight,
Oh! swallows if you leave us now, what shall we do to-night?
The swallows quickly answered, but flew on towards the sea,
And this is what the swallows said, or what it seemed to me.

Don't forget us, little children, though we fly across the seas
To spend the chilly winter months in sunnier lands than these;
But await us in the meadow and look for us in the lane:
For we'll all be back in England when the "Summer comes again."

And then the cruel winter came and snow was on the hill,
Yet in the little children's hearts the birds were with them still,
From across the world of waters and with swift unerring wing,
They knew their little feathered friends would come again with spring.

Don't forget then, little children, if our loving God so please
That faithful friends may meet again in sunnier lands than these.
He will wipe away the tear-drops, He will ease the bitter pain;
And re-unite all faithful hearts "When Summer comes again."

A LITTLE OUTING FOR LONDONERS.

PART II.

If Knebsworth is not to be visited continue the high road and it will take one on to Stevenage. Just at the entrance to the town on the right where the road is very wide is an inn called The Castle, where there is a strange sight to be seen and a still stranger story connected therewith. A well-to-do grocer of the name of Trigg, lived in this house; he was a singularly eccentric man, and made a most remarkable will, leaving his money to a brother on the condition that his executor should not allow his body to be buried, but that his coffin should be placed upon the tie beams of the roof of a barn or "hovel" at the back of the house, where it is still to be seen, and the people at the inn will show it to the visitor and also provide him or her with a copy of the will. The fact has been questioned, but there are two pieces of evidence to which the believers of this strange story may point, and which it is difficult to dispose of. In the first place there is the will, the provisions of which were certainly carried out, and the second is the coffin which is still to be seen supported upon the tie beams of the "hovel." It has been said that it is empty, but it would be difficult to verify this statement. That the story is impossible is a dangerous argument, because in 1896 the body of a young lady at Brokenhurst had remained unburied for three years, and although the sanitary authorities interfered they were powerless

in the matter. Lucas the Hertfordshire hermit, of whose eccentricities we shall speak later on, kept the body of his mother in his house for nearly a quarter of a year; and there are other cases on record.

Stevenage has two great peculiarities. The first is the width of its street which gives it a most characteristic appearance, and the second is the distance of the village from the church; the latter is approached by a long avenue,



H.W.B.

OLD TRIGGS' COFFIN, STEVENAGE.

which does not lead direct to it, and looks as if it had formerly belonged to some mansion. I was talking with the clergyman who I found in the church superintending harvest service decorations, and I asked him whether he thought the church had originally been built at a distance from the town, or whether the town had shrunk away. The first I suggested would only be the case if the church were monastic; he told me that although there was a monastery at Stevenage, it was not attached to the existing church, which appears always to have been parochial, and that the latter was the more probable solution of the difficulty, as there was evidence that the "black death" raged there, and a lane called "Dead Lane" may possibly record the fact. The church is a good example of the usual Hertfordshire type with a fine tower crowned by the local "spike." There is a very good brass to Stephen Hillard, a priest, and a fragment of a curious monument to a lady. The upper portion of the effigy alone exists, and the costume is that of the fourteenth century; on one side is a small figure of an angel, and on the other that of a monk. The clergyman explained that the monk was supposed to be attending the lady on her death-bed and the angel was receiving her soul. He told me that this curious piece of sculpture was found face downward and used as a doorstep; he thought it probable that it came from the



THE OLDEST TREE IN ENGLAND, WYMONDLEBURY CHESTNUT.

Abbey, and may have been brought here some time after the Reformation, when that building was pulled

down. There are some very early stalls in the choir, thirteenth century work, which also probably came from the Abbey; a fine niche at the end of the north aisle is of the same rich type as those we have previously noticed at Wheathampstead and Ayot. A series of remarkably pretty lanes lead from Stevenage church to the interesting village of Ippollits, but by taking a cut across the fields at Wymondley a great natural curiosity may be seen; it is a vast and very ancient tree, or we would rather say the "ruins" of a tree, for although it is alive and is surmounted by a fine group of foliage, yet its mighty branches are all lying broken around its vast trunk, and the latter like some old ruined tower is rent in twain and a fairly big tree grows in the gap. The "Wymondleybury Chestnut," is one of the curiosities of the county, and is an ancient landmark. Gilpin in his *Forest Scenery* (writing in 1789) says that it is "one of the largest trees that ever grew in England, and its girth is more than fourteen yards." As it stands on high ground when perfect it must have been visible for many miles round. I was told that it is mentioned in Doomsday Book, but I have not been able to verify the assertion. It is pleasant to record the fact that the present possessor of this venerable relic is fully alive to its value, and has shown his interest in antiquarian matters by having the moat which formerly surrounded the old Manor House close at hand excavated.

The cyclist had better proceed direct to Redcoats and leave his machine at the inn, The Hermit of Redcoats, and take the footpath which leads to Wymondleybury; it is only about half a mile from the inn. There was a priory at Wymondley which is mentioned in Dugdale's *Monasticon*, but little if anything of it now exists. A short walk by a path across the fields leads to Redcoats, a small hamlet between Wymondley and Ippollits. This place is remarkable for an eccentric named James Lucas who died in 1874. This strange being obtained the title of the "Hermit of



MINDEN CHAPEL.

Hertfordshire." Though a man of excellent education and comfortable means, he lived in one room, in his house, called Redcoats Farm. No one was admitted to this room; it is said he wore no clothes except an old blanket, and never washed! He was "a Jacobite" and refused to sign any document which had V.R. upon it, for fear that by so doing he was acknowledging the "existing dynasty." Lucas was no miser, for he gave away a good deal of money. Any beggar or tramp was relieved by him, but first of all he had to say "the Lord's Prayer," and although Lucas was a Protestant he gave a double alms to the man who could recite that prayer in Latin. Of course he only saw people from his window, he had to keep watchmen about the place, for he was once very nearly murdered by a house-breaker. Dickens describes Lucas under the name of "Old Grimes," and reports a conversation which he had with him. Lucas however flatly denied that the interview ever took place.

Should our readers desire to know more about this strange individual they can purchase at Hitchin *The History of the Hermit of Hertfordshire*.*

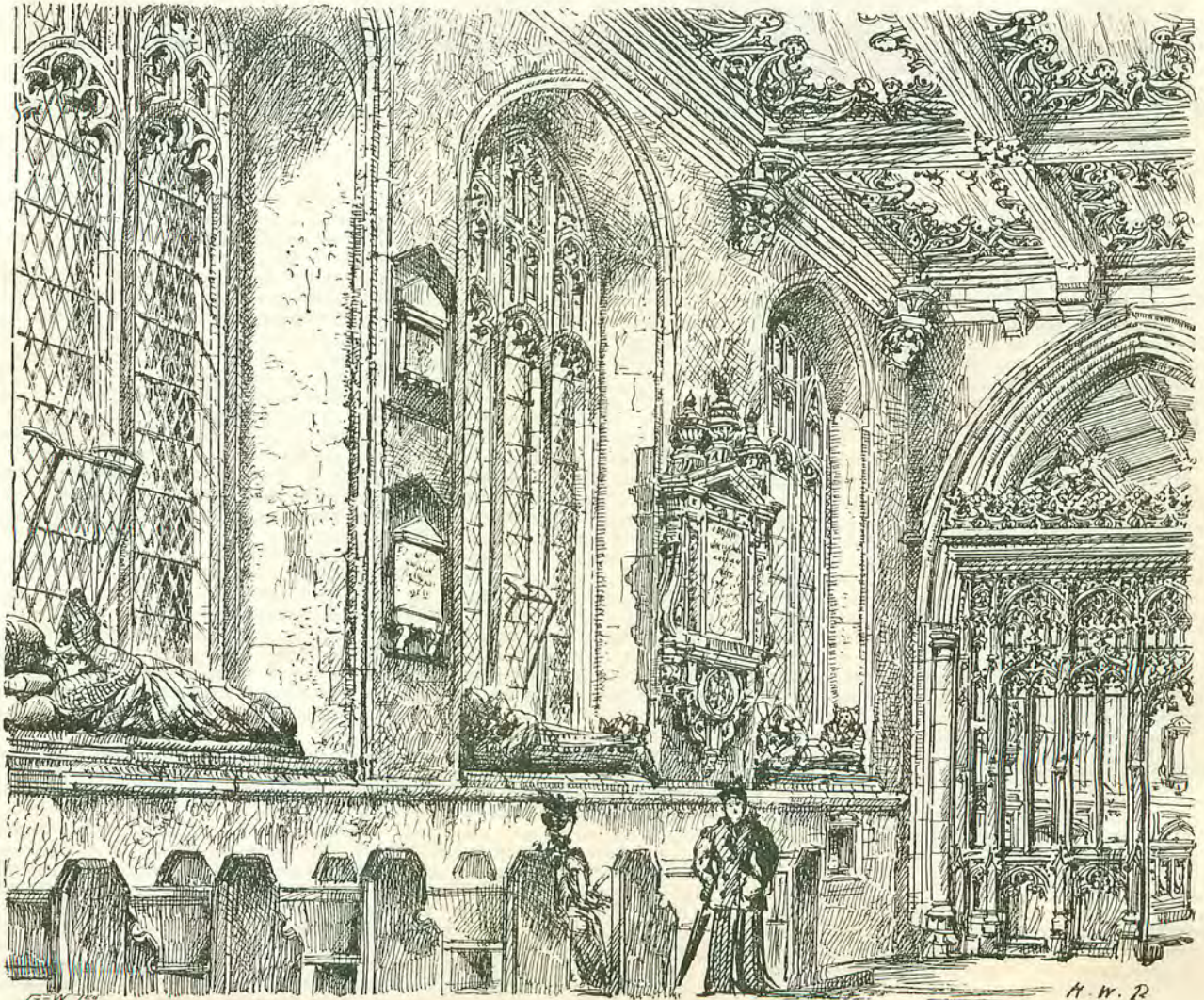
Ippollits or Saint Hippolite is a remarkably pretty village; it receives its name from the dedication of its church to Saint Hippolyte, an Arabian saint who appears to have

been a veterinary surgeon of great skill and eminence; he is, I believe, the patron saint of horse-dealers. Very few, if any other churches are dedicated to him in England, but there is a town in Austria which bears his name and several churches in France. Norden and Sir Henry Chauncey tell a curious story about the church here. They say that horses used to be driven into this church up to the altar, and Chauncey adds the details. They were brought out of "North Street," through the north porch of the church, which together with the church itself had a boarded floor for that purpose. Clutterbuck disbelieves the story, and points out that there is no North Street at St. Hippolite's, and that neither the church nor the porch have a wooden floor; however, this is not decisive, because in Norden's time (the commencement of the seventeenth century) the street north of the church may have been called "North Street," and the floor of the latter may have been boarded.

The church of Saint Hippolite is a remarkably pretty structure, of very diminutive scale, although it has all the features of a fairly large parish church, chancel, nave clerestory, aisles, western tower and two porches: it is really not larger than a chapel. It is most charmingly situated on the top of a hill, the ground falling rapidly away to the west and an elm-shaded road winding up to it. Although surrounded with vast and magnificent trees its proportions are so good that it does not look

insignificant, and the tower is really a dignified object. Internally there is a pretty little rood-screen and handsome founders' tomb. The place is a typical example of an old English village of the smaller kind, very sequestered and delightful. Passing along the pretty road west of the church and descending the dip, we soon find ourselves in the main road leading to Hitchin, but if we turn to the left in the opposite direction to Hitchin, we come to an inn called The Royal Oak; here there is a pathway leading up to a singular-looking wood-clad hill; if we follow this path (cyclists should leave their machines at The Royal Oak) we shall, upon entering the wood, come upon a very curious old ruin overgrown with trees and brambles. This is Minsden Chapel. Your girls who have an exploring mind will find the building interesting, but don't let them go there in their best clothes, as they will have a struggle with the brambles which completely fill the interior, and are the only congregation that has filled those sacred walls for many years, as the last time that any holy rite was performed here was in the year 1738, and that was a marriage by special licence; probably the building was a ruin at this period, as it had not been used for regular service since the year 1626. It is a little building about forty feet by seventeen, but a regular archaeological puzzle about it is a series of square apertures through the walls, which go right round the

* Paternoster and Hales, Hitchin.



EFFIGIES OF KNIGHTS TEMPLARS, HITCHIN CHURCH.



"THE BIGGIN," HITCHIN.

building; they are about three feet square, five feet six inches from the ground, and below the windows. When the building was perfect there must have been about fifteen of these. My first impression was that they were intended to support the beams of a floor, but a little examination proved that this could not have been their use, as the position of the doorways would not have allowed of a floor at this height. Although they are regularly built of stone, there are no marks of doors or casements, or I should have conjectured that it might have been a chapel attended by lepers, who always stood outside the church. They could not have been for the purpose of seeing the altar from the outside, because two of them are at the back of the altar. What could they have been for? They have puzzled me more than any ecclesiastical feature I have ever met with. Can any of your ingenious girls give a guess of their use? Beneath the ivy is seen a graceful chancel arch, but everything else is in a hopeless state of ruin and entanglement. About a mile off is a farm called Temple Dinsley, which occupies the site of a priory of Knights Templars, no remains of which now exist. I have not been able to establish any connection between this and Minsden Chapel. A walk of about three miles (a capital road for cyclists) leads to Hitchin, a very interesting and ancient town with a broad, high street and rather striking market-place; few English towns that I know, present such a number of old gabled houses, and the place has some interesting monastic remains. The parish church is a large and important structure erected at various dates. The great thirteenth century tower, more like a castle than an ecclesiastical structure, is crowned by a Hertfordshire "spike," which looks singular in such a combination. The south porch, which is generally open, is one of the finest in this

country, and although somewhat damaged externally by being patched up with plaster, its beautiful niches, panelling and doorways are good examples of elaborate fourteenth-century architecture. The interior of this porch, which is very large, is quite magnificent. Its stone ceiling is one of the richest examples of "Lierne vaulting" I know anywhere, and the numerous bosses are elaborately carved with angels, shields, etc. The sides of the porch are pierced by large perpendicular windows unglazed. The interior of the church is very striking on account of its great length and the richness of the wooden chancel screens. Unfortunately the rood screen no longer exists, but the parcloves at the ends of the aisles and between the side arches of the choir are remarkably handsome, as are also the ceilings of the aisles. The church is singularly rich in monuments, and there are three fine effigies placed upon the sills of the windows in the north aisle of the nave. Some writers affirm that these came from Temple Dinsley, others that they were originally in Minsden Chapel. Now it is not improbable that the oldest of these figures was brought from Temple Dinsley, because it seems to represent Sir Bernard Baliol who founded the house of the Knights Templars at Dinsley. The effigy is twelfth-century work, representing a knight in full chain-mail and is cut out of a solid block of Purbeck marble. The other two effigies are in no way connected with the first and were probably originally side by side upon the same tomb in this church. They represent Sir Edward Kendal and his lady (temp. Edward III.). They are remarkable works, and the effigy of Sir Edward is so similar to that of the Black Prince at Canterbury, that they are probably designed by the same hand; he is represented in plate armour with a lion at his feet, so that he must have been related to the royal family.

The lady's effigy is a very interesting one, and gives us a perfect study of the dress of a lady of quality of those days. The hair is confined in a tightly fitting cap which is surrounded by a coronet of metal inlaid with precious stones; she wears a tight-fitting jacket coming half way down the hips and trimmed with a border of beads; a long and perfectly plain skirt falls in graceful folds to the feet; over all is an ample cloak, exactly like that worn by a modern hospital nurse. At her feet are two pug-dogs looking at one another; they have bell collars. I believe that the Kendals built the magnificent porch which I have previously described. My space will not allow of my describing the very numerous monuments in this interesting church.

Near the church is a singularly picturesque old building called "The Biggin." It was formerly a Gilbertine convent and was saved from destruction by being bought in 1645 by a retired schoolmaster of the town, named Joseph Kemp, who gave it to the parish for an almshouse which purpose it still serves. It is very quaint and pretty and has a funny little wooden cloister, so low that one can scarcely stand up in it. It is said that the estate called "The Priory" contains interesting ruins of a house of the Carmelites, but it is not open to the public, and when I applied for admission it was politely refused, so I cannot describe it; all that I could see were the magnificent trees which overshadow the large demesne. At the time of the Reformation, Ralf Radcliffe became possessed of the priory; he was an eminent dramatic author of Henry VIII.'s days, and several of his plays are known; amongst others were "Dives and Lazarus," a comedy, "Patient Grizeld," a comedy. We need scarcely remind our readers that the word "comedy" bore a totally different signification in the

middle ages to what it does now. Dante, for instance, called his most majestic and awe-inspiring work "The Divine Comedy." Radcliffe declared that he never had and never would publish a work which he had not had by him nine years. I fear that would scarcely work well at the present day. Near the Priory in Tile House Street is a beautiful old fragment of Gothic architecture, now forming part of an inn. What it was originally I was unable to discover, but I fancy from the style

it was part of a church or chapel. Those who will have had enough of this four can return from Hitchin to town, and those who are interested may go on to Baldock, where there is a fine church with a very elegant and lofty rood-screen, still richer side screens, several good brasses and a larger collection of church chests than I have ever met with. A parchment hung upon the south wall records a grant of two pence per annum left to the church in 1287. The writing is coeval, and if

few people could write in those days, at any rate those who did, wrote magnificently; in fact, it was an art.

I trust that I have said enough to convince your readers that an interesting few days' holiday tour may be taken in Hertfordshire. If I have failed to do so the fault is mine and not that of my subject, and I trust to be forgiven if I have not succeeded in describing a district which I admire so greatly.

H. W. BRFWER.

THROUGH THE TELEPHONE.

By MARGARET LITTLETON.



OWN the long silent corridor of the hospital sped the youthful figure of Nurse Lester, till she reached the waiting-room, in which the telephone was keeping up a perpetual din. She closed the door with the swift yet noiseless motion of the trained nurse, assured herself by a

rapid glance that she was alone in the room, and took down the acoustic tube.

"Here, Surgical Hospital. Who is there?" There was a clear metallic ring in her usually soft voice, a studied distinctness in her enunciation, which showed that she was accustomed to conversation through the telephone.

The answer to her question came from an official, who informed her that a gentleman in a town fifty miles distant wished to speak with her.

"Very well; put us into communication, please," she answered. During the few minutes' silence which ensued, she threw back her head and straightened herself, while a look of pain came into her face.

"It must be the father of the dying boy," she thought, wondering how she should get through the task which awaited her.

"Is any one there?"

The words were spoken in a strong, mellow voice rendered somewhat unnatural by its passage through the telephonic wires.

"Yes, one of the nurses. Who is there?"

"Dr. Webber. How is my boy?"

The nurse paused an instant, then said as steadily as she could:

"He was very restless all night. Now he is—unconscious."

"Under the influence of morphia?"

"Yes."

A half-stifed groan sounded through the telephone, but an instant later the strong, manly voice, still trembling with suppressed emotion, pursued its inquiries.

"What is the temperature?"

"An hour ago there was a collapse: ninety-six degrees."

"What pulse?"

"Forty."

"Has the bandage been renewed?"

"Yes, twice since last night. The operation itself has been entirely successful; the inflamed shoulder is a shade paler, but—"

"But what?" There was agonised impatience in the tone.

"But the child is very weak. If his present state of exhaustion continues—"

"Well?"

"Then Dr. Hartley fears the worst."

There was a moment's silence, during which

the nurse's heart was wrung with sympathy for the poor father. Then came a fresh question in the strong voice struggling to be calm.

"Have you yet used camphor injections?"

"Yes, every hour, since four o'clock this morning."

"Pardon me all these questions. Who watched by my boy?"

"Nurse Bentley, whom you know."

"I'm glad of that. Eric is fond of her. Is she still with him?"

"Yes. In a few minutes I shall relieve her, as the child is in my ward."

"I'm glad of that too. You will be good to him, won't you?"

"Oh, yes—I promise you that! He's such a sweet little patient, so loving and—"

Her voice broke suddenly. It seemed so cruel to be talking thus, in short, disjointed sentences—to be wringing a father's heart by words which no sympathetic look or kindly touch could soften.

There was a corresponding quaver in Dr. Webber's voice as he said:

"May I communicate with you when you leave my little boy? When will that be?"

"Certainly. In six hours' time. At four o'clock this afternoon. By that time the crisis will probably be over."

"Thank you. Good morning!"

Nurse Lester turned slowly away from the telephone, and prepared to take her turn in watching beside the poor little unconscious boy, whose right arm and shoulder had been terribly mangled, two days ago, by a mad dog he had tried to stroke. It had been necessary to extract a portion of the shoulder-blade, and the operation, following on the previous loss of blood, seemed to have overtaxed the vitality of the delicate child that was but just three years old.

"Here, Dr. Webber. Is the child still alive?"

"Yes, he still lives."

"How is he?"

"Still unconscious under the influence of morphia. But the temperature is now ninety-six and a half degrees, and the pulse fifty."

"Thank God at least for that! How does he look?"

There was a tell-tale tremor in the nurse's voice as she answered:

"Very sweet and pathetic, like a little angel."

"Pale, of course?"

"Yes, like a waxen image."

"Poor little mite! Has the doctor seen him since this morning?"

"No; we expect him in half an hour."

"Is there any hope?"

"The matron says there is just a faint possibility of recovery."

"What do you say?"

At once surprised and touched, the nurse answered:

"I cling desperately to hope."

"So do I. I will ring again in an hour's time. Shall you be at the telephone?"

"Yes; it is part of my work, except in very special cases. Good afternoon!"

"Good afternoon!"

"Here, Dr. Webber. Has the doctor been?"

"Yes. He says that if Eric lives through the night, he will in all probability pull through."

"Who will sit up with him?"

"I shall. The regular night-nurses are all on duty."

"Thank you. Good evening!"

A thrill went through the nurse's heart—she scarcely knew why. At the same time she wondered why she had never heard anything about Eric's mother. But she had no time for idle musing—a nurse seldom has.

"How is my boy?"

"Alive and conscious."

There was an unmistakable ring of joy in the nurse's voice, something very like a sob in that of the father.

"Tell me more."

"He is very weak, but apparently out of pain."

"Has he spoken at all?"

"Yes. Twice he tried to kiss me and murmured, 'Dear Nursie, is Eric a good boy?'"

"Little darling! Has he taken any food?"

"Only a few spoonfuls of warm milk."

"I suppose I may not see him?"

"Not yet. He is too weak to stand excitement of any kind."

"You will tell me know when I may come?"

"Certainly."

"Good morning!"

"Is he any better?"

"Just a shade. We hope he will sleep without morphia. The wound looks healthy, but he is still too weak to move a finger."

"Poor mite! If only I could come to him!"

The nurse was silent. What could she say?

"Will you give him my love?"

"Better not." Her voice was full of tender consideration. "He might want to see you then; now he is quite content to stay where he is, poor little man."

"Well, you are right. I won't detain you any longer. Good night!"

Nurse Lester was again at the telephone, as she had been regularly twice a day for three weeks, talking with Dr. Webber about the little patient sufferer she had grown to love so dearly.