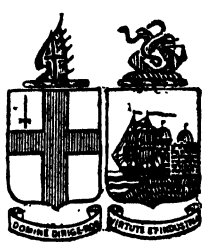
SOUTH WALES

The Country of Castles

Fourth Edition



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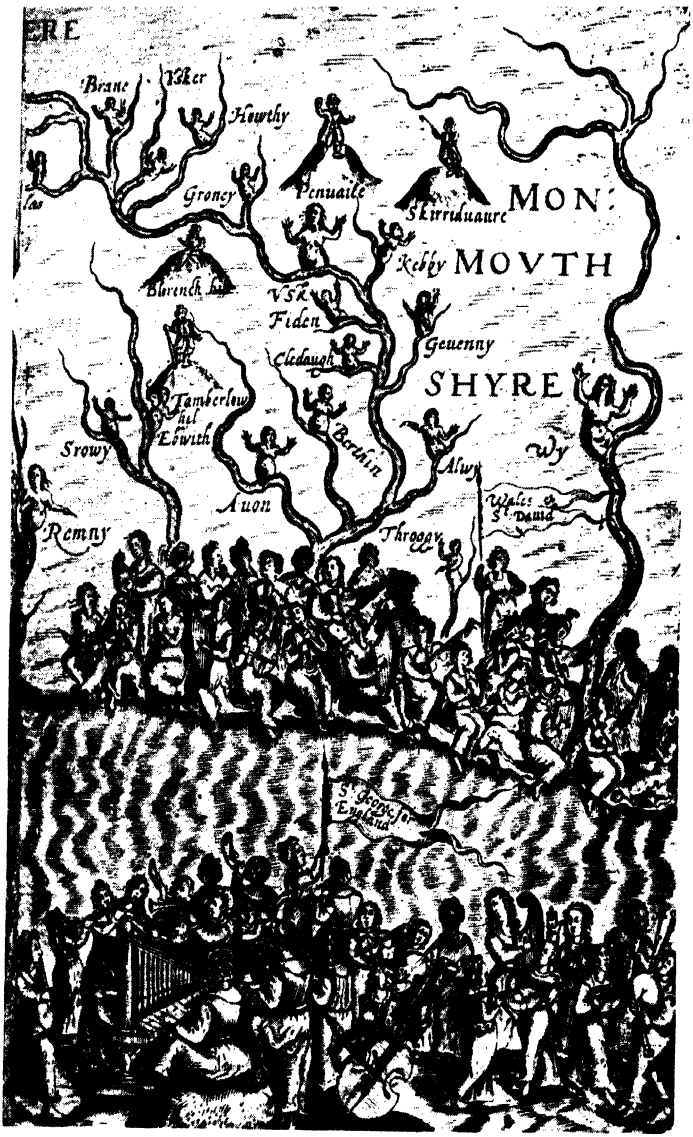
From a rare engraving



WELSH BORDERLANDS
After Michael Drayton.

SOUTH WALES

The Country of Castles

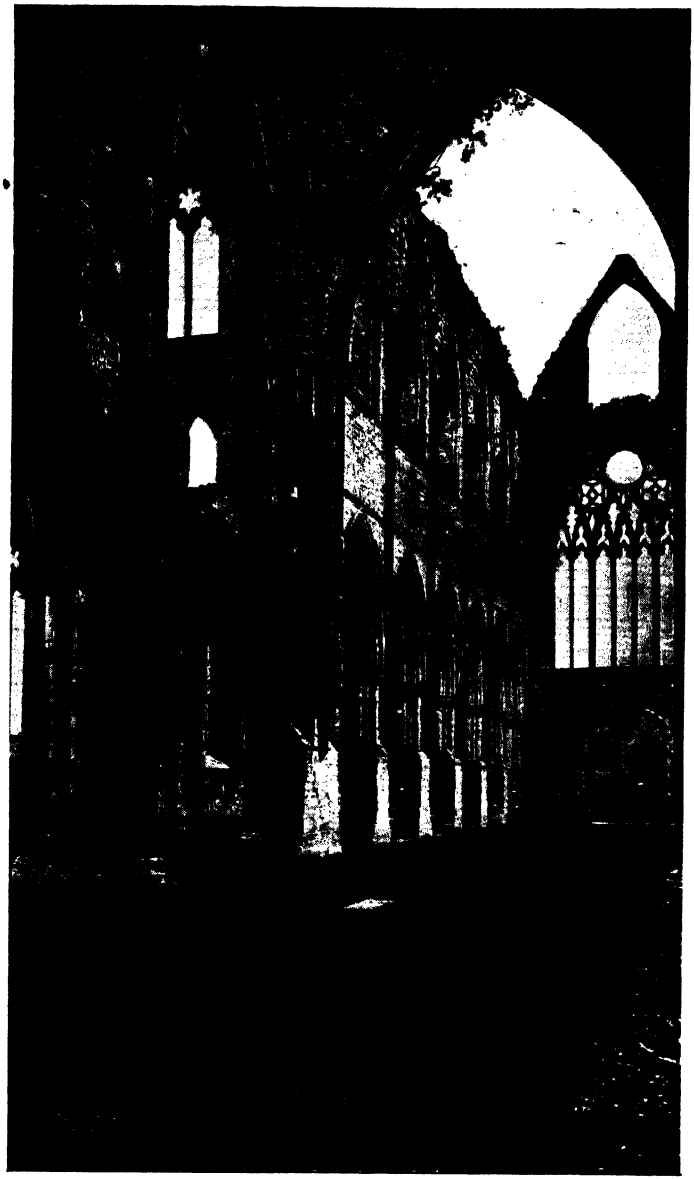
Introduction.

SINCE the assumption by the Great Western Railway of entire control over the line formerly known as the Manchester and Milford (familiarly described as the "M. and M.") leading from the capital of Carmarthenshire, through a country of varied charm and undeniable beauty, to Aberystwyth and the picturesque shores of Cardigan Bay, the "Garden of Wales" is no longer a *terra incognita* to holiday-makers from London and the Midlands, or to the dwellers in Swansea or Cardiff, Newport or Monmouth, Bristol or Bath, and the South-West of England generally. The line from Lampeter to Aberayron effectively opened up another portion of this delightful district. These changes brought a most captivating travel-centre almost to the very doors of those who most need rest, change or recreation, and who had hitherto been accustomed to seek them much further afield. A sojourn in the lovely "Garden of Wales," either at Gwbert-on-Sea, on the coast of Cardigan Bay, or amongst the verdant valleys of its hinterland, is now well within reach of all classes of holiday-makers.

The natural glories of South Wales—as regards mountain and valley, streams of limpid water, verdant fields and green woods, together with a sea-coast of varied features but always of surpassing beauty—were fully recognised by such early writers as Michael Drayton, who, three centuries ago, adorned

his " Polyolbion " with a symbolical picture of Welsh bards and English minstrels assembled at a sort of international Eisteddfod on either side of the Severn Sea. It was not, however, till the latter part of the Georgian era that the Welsh Tour came into vogue, although the roads were bad, the coaches of the most lumbersome description, and the majority of the inns little better than the primitive " Shoulder of Mutton " at Brecon, where Sarah Siddons first saw the light on July 5, 1755. Newport and Cardiff (then little more than picturesque villages, but abounding in historical associations and quaint old-world traditions and observances) were three days' journey from London and one at least from Bath, and it was far easier and less fatiguing to make a pilgrimage to Rome than to St. David's. Aberystwyth, as a miniature Brighton, with its " rooms " and chalybeate spring (still perpetuated by the name of a street), had already a limited number of votaries. One or two of the great *literati* of the time having successfully set the fashion, and Mrs. Piozzi having triumphantly led Dr. Johnson captive to the dells of Brynbella, the book-market was speedily flooded with handbooks and guides, good, bad and indifferent, but many of them full of charming aquatint views, which have survived the old order of things—the terrible coaches, the rat-haunted posting-houses, the rut-furrowed roads—and the march of railway progress which has brought the once costly and adventurous Welsh " round " well within the reach of the purse of the ordinary holiday-maker. If practicable, the pages of some of these quaint old-world volumes should be turned over before starting on the Welsh excursion, for the twentieth century traveller will assuredly not enjoy the facilities and conveniences afforded him the less because he realizes what South Wales was in the days when Richard Warner forsook his beloved Bath to write his " Welsh Walks," and a similar task was undertaken in turn by Sotheby, Gilpin, Wigstead, Wyndham, Pennant, Hoare, and a little later by William Roscoe.

Rich indeed is the topographical literature of South Wales, as the traveller will soon discover when he visits the splendid Public Libraries of Cardiff, Swansea and Aberystwyth. Not only is Richard Fenton's " Pembrokeshire " one of the finest



TINTERN ABBEY.

CHEPSTOW CASTLE.

works of its kind, but in our own day Mr. Edward Laws, in his "History of Little England Beyond Wales" (mysterious as the title may seem), has imparted an additional attraction to the "Country of Castles" generally, and specially to those magnificent relics of the past which Buck drew with faithful pencil between 1740 and 1742. Sir S. R. Meyrick's monumental "History of Cardiganshire" has unfortunately become exceedingly rare, but much useful information about Carmarthenshire may be gleaned from the pages of William Spurrell, whose handy little volume has gone through several editions since it first appeared a quarter of a century ago. Then again must not be forgotten the good work accomplished by Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall in the "Book of South Wales," which teems with graphic illustrations executed by the Brothers Dalziel and others, at a time when Tenby was still beyond railway reach, and the memories of the coaching-days (and especially that of a particularly obnoxious vehicle immortalized by Thackeray) were fresh in the minds of men. Mr. and Mrs. Hall loved and admired South Wales with a perfectly genuine enthusiasm, although their style of writing is now regarded as a little old-fashioned and out of date. Like Miss Seward they were inclined to exclaim with pardonable emphasis—

> "Proud of her ancient race, Britannia shows
> Where, in her Wales, another Eden glows,
> And all her sons, to truth and honour dear,
> Prove they deserve the Paradise they share."

It was for the benefit of those who desired to visit this "Eden" and "Paradise" under the ægis of the Great Western Railway, with a maximum of enjoyment and instruction and a minimum of cost and fatigue, that the "Country of Castles" was originally written, and is now re-edited in the interests of future travellers. The experience of some years has amply justified the force of its predictions as to the brilliant future in store for South Wales, when its natural beauties and historic associations become more widely known, not only in the United Kingdom but throughout the length and breadth of the great American Continent and the British Colonies.

II.—In the Welsh Borderlands: Newport and the Usk.

MONMOUTH, Tintern and Chepstow on the Wye, as well as Newport on the Usk, may all be described with sufficient accuracy as standing in the border country which ends on the banks of the Rumney River, a few miles to the east of Cardiff. Historically and otherwise Monmouth is a county of considerable interest, and a tour in Wales may very appropriately commence with a brief sojourn in its quaint old-fashioned capital town, while the exploration of the venerable ruins of Tintern and Chepstow obviously forms an appropriate prelude to a journey through the "Country of Castles." Any detailed description of them, however, is obviously beyond the scope of the present work, so we will suppose that the holiday-maker who has wisely made up his mind to choose South Wales as the scene of his outing, having breakfasted comfortably in London, takes one of the forenoon expresses from Paddington, which two hours and a half later arrives at Newport. Having lunched at his leisure in the Restaurant Car *en route*, there will be plenty of time left to see the sights of Newport, before either going to his hotel, or, if time presses proceeding to Cardiff, which is barely twenty minutes distant by rail.

The holiday-maker "in the know" should, if possible, halt for a night at Newport, for in some respects the Usk is no mean rival to the Wye, and by breaking the journey there the traveller will have an excellent opportunity of visiting the remains of ancient Caerleon (associated like Tintagel, Avalon and Glastonbury with the Arthurian legend), not more than three miles distant. Caerleon, rightly interpreted as "The City of the Legions," was as Isca Silurum or Augusta, the chief Roman

station in the wild country of the fierce Silures. " Isca " stands for the Usk, and " Silurum " relates to the Welsh tribes of the Silures. It was one of the three great legionary fortresses of Roman Britain garrisoned by the Legion II. Augusta till near the termination of Roman rule in Britain. Here, too, it is said King Arthur once held his court, the legend lingering on for centuries in the name of a field known as that " of the Round Table." Caerleon is said to have had a cathedral in the fourth century until the see was transferred to St. David's in 519; but the basis for this is attributed to Welsh legend. In a meadow bordering the river rises the Mound of Caerleon—a lofty tumulus. It was here that the Princes of Wales, " Kings of Gwent and Lords of Caerleon," are said to have contested every inch of ground with the invading stranger. Even the details of the struggle are forgotten, and the " giant tower " of Caerleon is now only the centre of a scene of tranquil beauty.

Since the far-off touring days of 1797 Newport has grown into a busy, prosperous commercial town of over 93,000 inhabitants. The late Viscount Tredegar was the " fairy godmother " of Newport's present prosperity, just as the Marquesses of Bute are the hereditary promoters of the well-being of Cardiff. The docks were opened two miles below the Bridge in 1842, and they have been largely added to since. Newport is in close proximity to the rich and inexhaustible coalfields of South Wales and Monmouthshire, and is the natural port for that portion of it which is now undergoing immense and important developments. The Alexandra Docks and Railway Company (now owned by the Great Western Railway Company) adopted a progressive policy and supplemented the magnificent and spacious dock by a generating station, concentrating at one spot the whole of the requisite hydraulic power for operating the machinery; and erecting a quay 800 feet long with warehouses and lifting equipment. The South Dock extension increased the water area by about twenty acres. What " Old Father Tiber " was to Rome so is the River Usk to Newport, and even more, for this picturesque tidal stream renders it the natural place for shipment of coal well adapted for locomotive, marine and general manufacturing

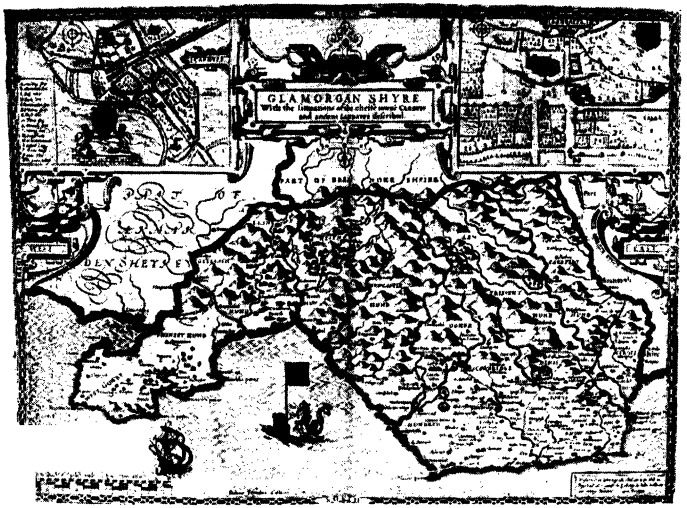
purposes. If the proximity of Caerleon is not a sufficient guarantee of antiquity, there is her own ruined stronghold, at the very gate of the "Country of Castles," which boasts a distinctly Roman origin with a Norman superstructure, while the venerable church of St. Woollos or St. Gwynlliw mutely attests the importance of Newport in the Middle Ages. For many years a great portion of the remains of Newport Castle has been utilized for commercial purposes, but this has finally ceased, and many interesting relics of an eventful past now meet the gaze of the visitor. It is no longer difficult to conjure up visions of what "Castell Newydd" was like when Churchyard wrote :—

"A towne nere this, that buylt is all a length,
Which seate doth stand, for profite more than strength,
Cal'd Neawport now, there is full fayre to viewe.
A ryht strong bridge is there of timber newe,
A river runnes full nere the castle wall,
Nere church likewise, a mount behold you shall,
Where sea and land, to sight so plain appeeres,
That there men see, a part of five fayre sheeres,
As upward hye, aloft to mountaine top,
This market towne, is buylt in healthful sort,
So downeward loe, is many a marchant's shop,
And many sayle to Bristowe from this port,
Of auncient tyme, a citie hath it bin,
And in those daies, the castle hard to win,
Which yet shewes fayre, and is repayred a parte,
As things decayed, must needes be helpt by art."

Newport Castle in form is nearly a right-angled parallelogram, massively built with rubble, but coigned with hewn stone. The lower portions of the walls, washed by the river at high tide, attain a thickness of over eleven feet. In the middle of the side, towards the water, is a square tower which seems to have been the keep or citadel, flanked with small turrets and containing the remains of a spacious apartment, called the state room, with a vaulted stone roof. Underneath is a sally-port, leading to the river, with a beautiful Gothic arch, once defended by a portcullis, the groove of which is still visible. At each extremity of this side are octagon towers. To the left of the middle tower are the remains of the baronial hall, with a large fireplace and richly decorated windows. Vestiges of numerous apartments are seen in the area, and several chimneys appear in the side walls.

NEWPORT CASTLE AND BRIDGE.
From an old print.

TRANSPORTER BRIDGE OVER THE USK AT NEWPORT.



OLD MAP OF GLAMORGANSHIRE.

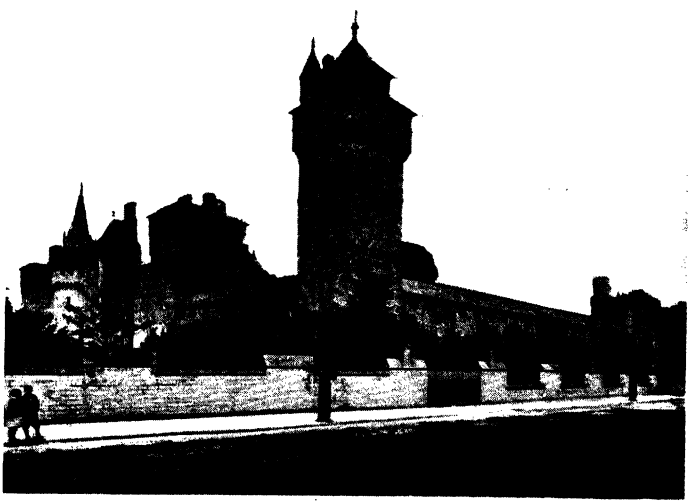
CITY HALL, CARDIFF.

Doubtless there were also in ancient times a deep moat and strong walls on the town side. These have disappeared, but the massive dungeons still remain. According to Coxe the greater part of the existing Castle was built after the Norman Conquest, very probably before the reign of Henry II. It is more than likely that Robert, Earl of Gloucester and Bristol (a natural son of Henry I.) so enlarged and improved the existing fortress at Newport, that he could effectively stay the incursions of the Welsh, who frequently wrested Caerleon (the "Old City") from the Anglo-Normans. After the death of the Earl of Gloucester in 1173 Newport passed into the hands of the Despencers. In 1346 it belonged to Ralph, Earl of Stafford, one of the bravest of the warriors who fought at Crecy under the banner of the Black Prince. On the attainder of his descendant the third Duke of Buckingham, the "Castle and Lordship" were alike seized by Henry VIII. One of its subsequent owners was Lord Herbert of Cherbury.

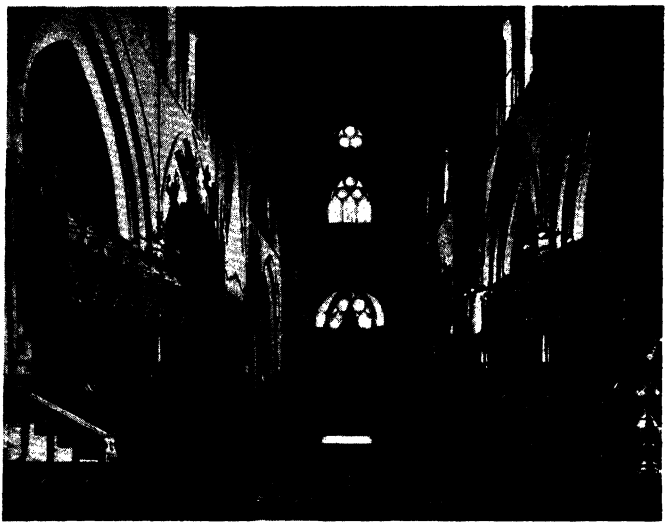
Like Fishguard, Newport has had its modern battle, although scarcely on the heroic scale of the conflicts of Caerleon. A bullet in a wooden pillar of the Westgate Hotel is a visible memorial of the fight in which Mayor Sir Thomas Phillips repelled the attack of a formidable Chartist mob, headed by John Frost, one of his predecessors in office. At the top of the hill stands out boldly the tower of the old parish church of St. Woollos, the Mother Church of Newport, and now the Pro-Cathedral of the recently created See of Monmouth. The Norman Nave (about 1110) is the oldest part of the church, but centuries before that portion was erected there was a church on this hallowed spot. As a sacred site it takes us back to the beginning of the fifth century, when Gwynlliw Filwr, that is, Woollos the Warrior, erected here his Templum, or small chapel, of mud and wattle. So that for 1,400 years there has stood a Christian place of worship on the top of Stow Hill. About the year 1440 the present north and south aisles and the massive western tower were begun. This XVth century enlargement enclosed the severe but grand Norman nave within the lofty and spacious Gothic aisles. Someone has described the Church viewed

from the interior as "A Norman jewel in a Gothic casket." The inclusion of the nave with its clerestory windows, now reduced to apertures in the internal walls, gives the church a very singular appearance. One cannot but be impressed with the perfect proportions of the Norman arches of the nave. In the words of Prof. Edward A. Freeman, "No better or more typical Norman interior on a moderate scale could be desired. It is one of the most interesting relics—ecclesiastically, architecturally, and historically—in the Diocese, if not in the Principality itself.

CARDIFF CASTLE FROM THE WEST, 1777



CARDIFF CASTLE.



THE CHOIR, LLANDAFF CATHEDRAL.

CAERPHILLY CASTLE.

III.—Cardiff and its Castle. Llandaff and its Cathedral. Caerphilly.

WITHIN half an hour of leaving the banks of the Usk, you have crossed the Rumney River and find yourself in the heart of the City of Cardiff, where the "old order" and the march of progress and improvement are seen in violent (if not altogether uninstructive) contrast.

There is, perhaps, no place in the United Kingdom which has grown more rapidly during the past half century than Cardiff—a town of comparatively little importance about eighty years ago when the mother of General Sir Baden Powell made the water-colour sketch of it, now amongst the noteworthy treasures of the local Free Library. When the second Marquis of Bute, "the creator of modern Cardiff," died in 1858, the population of Cardiff was 16,000. Thirty years before that it was barely 3,000, and in 1801 only 1,870. At the present time it is 230,000. The rateable value of the borough in 1867 was £176,000; to-day it is nearly one and three-quarter millions sterling. Notwithstanding these remarkable figures, and the fact that Cardiff is now beyond dispute the premier port in the world for the shipment of coal she respectfully demurs to the off-repeated sobriquet of the Chicago of Wales. Cardiff certainly more closely resembles ancient Carthage when at the zenith of her opulence and power, than Chicago, for Carthage had a past history to be proud of, and so has Cardiff. Her first charter dates from the reign of Edward III., and within a short distance of the magnificent docks, which bear witness to her present commercial success and the last of which was inaugurated in 1907 by King Edward VII., rise the

battlements and towers of a venerable castle which flourished as far back as the Norman Conquest.

In 1838 the shipment of coal "coastwise" from Cardiff amounted to only 123,000 tons. During a recent year the almost incredible total of nearly twenty-five million tons was exported from the sister docks of Bute, Barry and Penarth, all of which, like Cardiff, are now owned by the Great Western Railway. The City Hall and Law Courts, situated in Cathay's Park, have cost Cardiff over £250,000, and included in the park are also the University College of South Wales and Monmouthshire, the Technical College, the Glamorgan County Council Offices, the Registry Office of the University of Wales, and the National Museum of Wales, the whole completing a magnificent pile of buildings, the like of which is not excelled in Europe.

Cardiff is a Garden City, and it has become so in no small degree by the foresight of the civic fathers. It is remarkable for its sylvan area bordering the river right into the centre of the City, this being due to the proximity, on the one side, of the Castle grounds, and on the other of the Sophia Gardens and Fields, which the Marquis of Bute opens freely to the citizens. On their part, the City Corporation have brought the magnificent estate of Llandaff Fields, and have spent, on Parks and Open Spaces, nearly £400,000. Roath Park, covering 120 acres, includes a large Lake, Botanical Gardens, Pleasure Gardens and Concert Pavilion. Another Pavilion for open air concerts has also been erected at Llandaff Fields. A unique feature has been the presentation to the City of a beautifully situated and fully stocked park by Mr. Charles Thompson, and known as "Syr David's Field."

Next to Windsor, Cardiff Castle is one of the most remarkable buildings of the sort in the country, and appears to gaze complacently at the magnificent Law Courts and Municipal Offices which have arisen in the Metropolis of Wales.

Cardiff Castle has been completely restored, but still retains some of its 11th-century features. Robert Curthose, eldest son of William the Conqueror, was confined in Cardiff Castle for thirty years, and died there. Traces of even the

Roman builder still remain. During the past sixty years the late Lord Bute and the present Marquis each carried out restorations, extensions and embellishments on an elaborate scale, with the result that the palatial Welsh residence of the Butes to-day amply repays the study of the artist as well as the archæologist. Every visitor to Cardiff should make a point of seeing the Castle, for with the recent demolition of the north side of Duke Street the view to be obtained from that street is a sight not to be missed. At intervals on the outer walls are sculptured animals. The present buildings of the Castle are mainly a restoration by the late William Burges, A.R.A., of the mediæval fortress. On the site have been discovered the remains of a Roman gateway and of a massive wall of Roman origin. Upon this foundation an earthwork fortification was erected at a later period. In the Middle Ages a wall enclosed the Keep and the Mediæval Castle. The only portion left of the Norman Castle is the ruined Keep, built by Robert, Earl of Gloucester, on a moated mound in the centre of the Court. Next to the gateway in Castle Street is the Black Tower which dates from the 13th century. It is linked to the Clock Tower by a massive curtain wall. The interior of the Castle is lavishly decorated in mediæval style, the Clock Tower Apartments, the Grand Staircase, the Banqueting Hall and the Library being particularly fine. A portion of the Castle (when no one is in residence) is open to visitors on weekdays from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 2.30 p.m. to 4 p.m. on payment of a fee of 2s., the proceeds being given to charity.

For the entire story of the famous castle which Rowlandson sketched in 1799 (two years after the Fishguard invasion, when the Napoleonic scare was beginning to make itself felt in Wales), the holiday-maker is referred to the "official hand-book."

Every visitor to Cardiff will of course regard a pilgrimage to Llandaff and its cathedral as an essential part of his or her programme. The contrast between the busy commercial city of the present and the tranquil village city of the past is indeed a curious one. In the midst of the latter, amongst green fields, rises the shrine of SS. Dubricius and Teilo. The cathedral,

rebuilt in 1107 and added to by many pious benefactors, fell into ruin after the Reformation, an Italian temple still further disfiguring the ngelected edifice. It was carefully restored in the seventh decade of the nineteenth century, and the reredos now contains several paintings by the late Dante Gabriel Rossetti.

All visitors to Cardiff should certainly follow the example set by their Majesties the King and Queen during their visit to South Wales and make a pilgrimage by road or rail through a tract of rich pasture land, studded with smiling villages, to the majestic ruins of Caerphilly Castle—once the border fortress of the Welsh Marches. Its origin has been variously accounted for, but we know that whilst owned by Hugh le Despencer, Edward II. took refuge there, and it was for some time besieged by Queen Isabella and her adherents. In 1400, when described as " gigantic Caerphilly, a fortress great in ruins," it was held by Owen Glendower. Five centuries have passed away since then, but Caerphilly still heads the list of the ruins of the " Country of Castles," at any rate as far as mere extent is concerned, for its walls cover an area of some thirty acres, while its great tower although much out of the perpendicular, is 80 feet high. The outer of the three moats, crossed originally by no less than thirteen drawbridges, was two miles in length, while the principal court was 200 feet long by 120 wide. Its general aspect is rather that of a deserted city than a dismantled fortress, and it gains in rugged grandeur by the proximity of two bleak and rocky ridges to its tangle of walls and towers. The remarkable ruins were visited by King Edward VII. and Queen Alexandra in July, 1907, and by King George V. and Queen Mary in July, 1912.

IV.—Picturesque Penarth—an Ideal Seaside Residential Centre—Barry—Porthcawl and its Golf Links—Southerndown.

WITHIN twelve minutes reach of Cardiff by the trains and rail-motors of the Great Western Railway lies Penarth, a charming spot on the northern shores of Severn Sea, and richly endowed by nature with all the requirements of a popular and prosperous seaside residential centre. Modern Penarth is to the Cardiff of to-day what Kingstown has long been to Dublin. For a time the name was principally associated with one of the great docks, but of late years the small and unimportant village of half a century ago has been gradually replaced by terraces of well-built houses and groups of handsome detached mansions standing in smiling gardens, and embracing the three ecclesiastical parishes of Penarth ("the bear's head"), Cogan and Llandough. Penarth, like Cardiff, has a history. Possibly the most important event in its annals was the matrimonial alliance of two centuries ago which made the ancestors of the Earl of Plymouth its ground-landlord, for both the present prosperity and future possibilities of Penarth must be largely attributed to the energy and enterprise of the actual holder of that title (better known as Lord Windsor) and his mother, under whose auspices many of the earlier local improvements were originated and carried out.

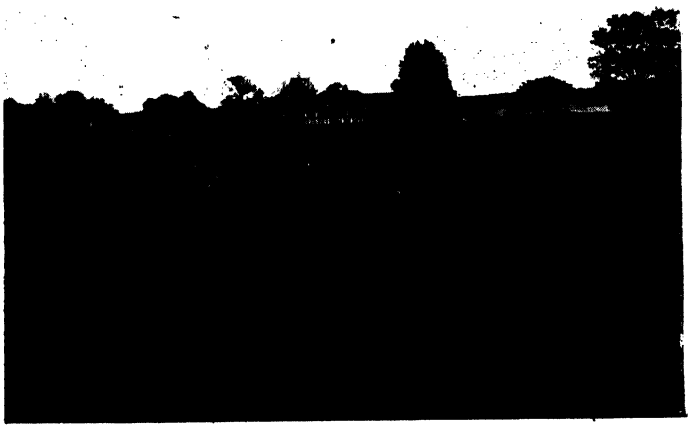
The view obtainable from the Windsor Gardens at Penarth is one not soon to be forgotten. Roughly speaking, you stand midway between the bold headlands known as Penarth and

Lavernock—the former giving the name of " the bear's head " to the whole district. Immediately around and below you is a wealth of vegetation rarely to be met with. The drives and walks are lined with shady trees, while ferns and wild flowers (three shades of valerian amongst them) grow luxuriantly in the rich grey marl of the cliff-side. Close to the Yacht Club is the pier from which, during the season, steamers are constantly starting for the coasts of Somerset and Devon, which are visible in clear weather. From this particular coign of vantage a glimpse may be obtained not only of " Wonderful Wessex " but of the " Shire of the Sea Kings." On an exceptionally clear day even the dim outline of the " Cornish Riviera " may possibly be discernible. Weston and Clevedon are only some ten miles away; Penarth, on the opposite coast, being equidistant between the two. Near the Welsh shore are the islands of Flat Holme and Steep Holme. The latter once possessed a fort, but is now only celebrated for its wild peonies.

Penarth is exceptionally healthy, and its death-rate phenomenally low. " This," writes a local expert, " is accounted for by the great care and attention given to all sanitary matters and to the town being built at a height of from 100 to 250 feet above sea-level, with a general slope towards the South and South-West, thereby receiving the fullest possible benefit from the sun, while all breezes from Easterly or Southerly directions reach the town from the sea thus causing it to be cool in the summer, and mild in the winter. The mortality rate has been one of the lowest in the United Kingdom for years. The water is obtained from the Brecknock Beacons, and is subjected to careful chemical and bacteriological examinations periodically throughout the year, and is declared to be 'soft, of great purity, and free from contamination.' "

The Esplanade at Penarth was laid out at the expense of the late Earl of Plymouth, and few places of its size possess more numerous or well-appointed public institutions. Penarth is singularly rich both in churches and schools; Mr. Andrew Carnegie gave it a Free Library and Reading Room, built on a site of which Lord Plymouth was the donor; the splendid

WINDSOR GARDENS AND PIER, PENARTH.



GOLF COURSE, PENARTH.

BATHING POOL, BARRY ISLAND

BARRY ISLAND FROM THE CLIFFS.

Public Baths cost no less than £8,000, and the town can also boast of Clubs devoted to Yachting, Cricket, Lawn Tennis and Golf.

The excellent links of the Glamorgan Golf Club at Lower Penarth are close to the Taff Vale Railway Station. The course covers 18 holes, and the bogey is 81. A ladies' section plays over the same course. The pavilion is both roomy and handsome, the interests of the fair sex being specially considered in the arrangements. The membership of the Club is large. All information as to the conditions under which visitors may join the Club can be readily obtained on application to the Secretary, Penarth. Hotel and lodging accommodation at Penarth is both good and abundant. Fifty years ago there were barely 200 houses at Penarth, and most of these were cottages. To-day Penarth has become not only Cardiff's favourite and most fashionable seaside residential centre, but the place from which nearly every point of interest on the littoral of Severn Sea may be most conveniently and expeditiously visited both by land and sea.

Barry and its environs offer excellent inducements to visitors and is increasing in popularity year by year. The Pebble Beach is of great interest, the pebbles, raised in crescents by the action of the tide, extending for nearly two miles. The Barry Golf Club have an excellent nine-hole course at the Leys. Barry is a good centre for tourists, who can avail themselves of marine excursions to the well-known Bristol Channel seaside resorts of Portishead, Clevedon, Weston-super-Mare, Minehead, Lynmouth, Ilfracombe and Clovelly.

Barry Island is one of its chief attractions, as it provides excellent boating and bathing on firm and beautiful sands.

A short and pleasant journey from Cardiff by a Great Western train brings you to Bridgend, where excellent fishing may be obtained both in the Ogmore and its tributary the Ewenny. Bridgend is the station for Southerndown, which has deservedly been described by more than one writer as a "Glamorganshire Paradise." Visitors can obtain conveyances at Bridgend to drive the 4½ miles of good road to Southerndown. Nowhere on the

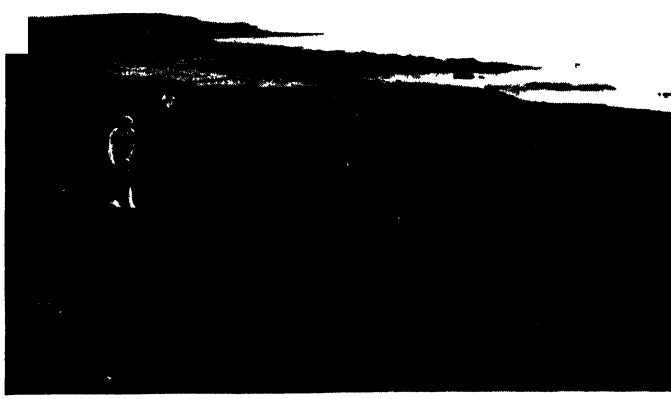
Morganwg coastline is the air more pure or the bathing safer than at Southerndown. The local Golf Club possesses excellent 18-hole links, with a spacious Club House erected at the cost of several thousand pounds. The course, of 5,900 yards in length, is upon mountain turf, with every variety of play and stroke. The hazards are natural, making the bogey a difficult 84. Visitors may use the links upon being introduced and paying a moderate daily fee, or special terms for a week or month. From the course, Mr. R. Endersby Howard, the well-known golf writer, says: "You survey a rare panorama—the Vale of Glamorgan with its undulating farm lands stretching as far as the eye can see on the one side, and the Bristol Channel on the other. At your feet is the road to Southerndown, winding through the mountainside; below it is the River Ogmore bordered by larch and birch, which change their shade of green every month; and beyond this is a vast tract of sandhills. . . . Southerndown is a well designed course on turf of the virgin mountain variety." At Bridgend and Southerndown the holiday-maker finds himself in the midst of a country of churches as well as of castles. Coity and Coychurch will both repay a visit, but the Castellated Priory of Ewenny, with many of its original features uninjured, is an ecclesiastical building of more than ordinary interest. Ewenny Priory was founded in 1146 for a community of Benedictine monks from Gloucester. The Priory chapel is still very perfect, and in it may be seen the tomb of the Founder, an ancient font, a double piscina, and the remains of a Celtic cross.

Across the Ogmore, and not more than seven miles from Bridgend, is Porthcawl. From a port of small importance Porthcawl has developed into a watering-place, renowned for the salubrity of its climate, the dryness of its air, the safety of its bathing, and the excellence of its golf-links, reputed, like those at Penarth, to rank amongst the finest south of the Tweed. It commands a glorious view of the Somerset and Devon coast on the other side of the Bristol Channel, and during the summer may be made the starting point for many agreeable excursions. For obvious reasons Porthcawl is the site of a commodious

EWENNY PRIORY

PORTHCAWL ESPLANADE.

THE RFSI BAY, PORTHCAWL



PORTHCAWI GOI F COURSE.

Convalescent Home. Close to it is "Ty Mawr," the Great House, at Newton Nottage, once a residence of the luckless Anne Boleyn, and which has been fully described in Mr. Blackmore's "Maid of Sker." While at Porthcawl the holiday-maker should not miss the opportunity of visiting the romantic graveyard of Briton Ferry, the beautiful church at Baglan, Port Talbot, Dunraven and Ogmore Castles, and the oak-covered "Mynydd Margam," at the foot of which nestles the interesting remains of the once celebrated Cistercian Abbey of St. Mary's, founded in the middle of the twelfth century by Robert, Earl of Gloucester. We are now well within reach of both the Vale of Neath and Gowerland, but they can be more conveniently dealt with in connection with Swansea.

V.—Swansea : Past and Present.

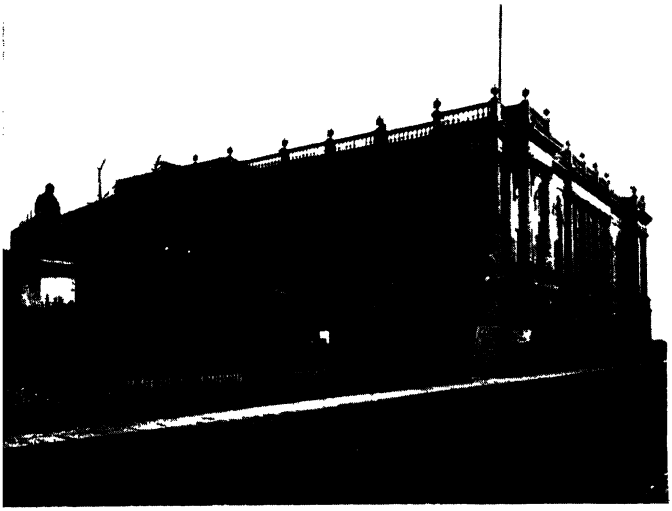
ALTHOUGH Swansea has been described as the "Metallurgic Metropolis of Wales," it can boast not only of possessing a history of more than ordinary interest, but of having given both England and Wales quite a number of distinguished "worthies." It is, like Cardiff, fortunate in having such competent and enthusiastic historians as the late Mr. Lewis W. Dilwyn and the late Mr. S. C. Gamwell, whose admirable "Official Guide and Handbook," published on the occasion of the visit of the British Association to Swansea, over a quarter of a century ago, would amply repay a careful perusal.

For the benefit of intending holiday-makers, it is proposed to deal with Swansea, not as one of the great commercial and industrial centres of the Empire, but as a pleasant up-to-date town, replete with every possible convenience, including excellent hotel accommodation, where one may live in ease and comfort while visiting the rural beauties of the Vale of Neath or exploring the far-too-little-known nooks and corners of scarcely less romantic Gowerland. Swansea has a splendid Public Library, which, like the Royal Institution of South Wales and the Museum, should be carefully included in every programme of sight-seeing. In the Art Gallery will be seen the beautiful and interesting collection of engraved portraits and pictures presented to the town by the late Mr. J. Deffett Francis.

Since 1188, when Giraldus wrote it Sweynsei, the name of the capital of Gowerland has been spelt in a number of different ways, and it is only since 1738 that the word Swansea appears in official records. Nevertheless, between 1200 and 1700, Swansea

SWANSEA BAY.
From an old print.

SWANSEA CASTLE.
From an old engraving.



ASSIZE COURTS SWANSEA

KING'S DOCK, SWANSEA.

received the grant of no less than nine charters, five from Kings, two from Lords Marcher, and two from Lord Protector Oliver Cromwell. The last-named have been at last recovered and placed amongst the archives of the Corporation. These grants mark various epochs in the eventful history of the town from the time that the Borough was first created by William de Braose in 1210, down to the troublous times of the Civil War and the scarcely less exciting year 1685, when James II. was pleased to issue a charter of a somewhat restrictive character. In the course of the Civil War Swansea and its Castle changed hands several times, but on May 19, 1648, Oliver Cromwell entered the town in person, and distributed £10 to the poor. In the following year he returned, and was sumptuously entertained at the house of the Portreeve in the High Street. Cromwell seems to have always entertained a friendly feeling towards Swansea, for in 1652 he sent various sums there " for the use of the poor," and eventually gave the charters of an unwonted liberal character already alluded to.

Swansea is almost as rich in antiquities and old-world associations as it is in charters. Although the Castle, built by the Bishop of St. David's in 1330, is obscured by the surrounding buildings, it retains many features of interest ; the ascent to the summit is somewhat dark and dusty, but a fine panoramic view of the town can be obtained from the tower. The old Franchise Prisons and the restored Church of St. Mary should both be visited. The latter contains several interesting monuments, and since 1840 sundry traces of the venerable " Hospital of the Blessed David," founded in 1330, have been brought to light at the back of one of the inns in which Swansea abounds.

In the muster roll of Swansea notabilities of the past, Mr. Gamwell gives a place to Bishop Henry de Gower, " The William of Wykeham of Wales " ; John Gower, the poet ; Hugh Gore, an Irish prelate, who founded the Swansea Grammar School ; Philip Jones, the Parliamentary Governor of Swansea Castle ; Richard Nash, " the incomparable Beau " ; Richard Savage, the poet ; sundry local writers and artists ; and last, but not least, Sarah Siddons's unfortunate sister, Ann Kemble, afterwards Ann

Curtis and finally Ann Hatton, best known as a poetess and novelist by her sobriquet of "Ann of Swansea." She was a most voluminous writer, but opinions are divided as to her literary merits. Born at Worcester in 1764, she outlived nearly all her contemporaries, and died in Swansea at the beginning of Queen Victoria's reign. The late J. Deffett Francis used to say he had perused the whole of her published works in the British Museum and had survived the ordeal.

Swansea abounds in curious old-fashioned houses like that in which the great Bath Master of Ceremonies was born—a fact which is commemorated by an artistic tablet with a Latin inscription; but they are fast disappearing, and so are many of the old hostelries, including the original "Mackworth" Hotel, where Rowlandson is said to have recognised William Coombe ("Dr. Syntax") as a waiter.

Swansea Harbour affords shelter for ships of the largest burthen, and the docks, now controlled by the Great Western Railway, rank amongst the finest in the world. The harbour is surrounded by 20 miles of railways belonging to the Company, and every modern improvement has been adopted.

The King's Dock, opened in September, 1909, is sixty-six and a half acres in extent. The first sod was cut by King Edward VII. in July, 1904.

Swansea, in addition to being the principal port for the shipment of copper and tinplates, has attracted a considerable amount of other trade from all parts of the world. The coming of the National Oil Refineries (the works of the Anglo-Persian Oil Co.) to Skewen has marked an important stage in the industrial affairs of the Port of Swansea.

Mr. Gamwell clearly points out that Swansea possesses superior attractions for the fisherman and the geologist, as well as for the antiquarian or the humble holiday-maker on mere pleasure bent. He bids you investigate the sandstone of Kilvey hills, or discover the pools and eddies of the bay, where cod, gurnets, ling and whiting may be easily captured within a short distance of the Swansea, Mumbles or Port Talbot beaches. He will take you both to Gowerland and the Vale of Neath in due

course. Meanwhile, you must learn to appreciate the beauties of landscape and seascape on the weed-strewn, wide-stretching Swansea sands, sung of by Swansea's own particular poetess and extolled by Walter Savage Landor, who wrote, while an exile in Italy, " Give me Swansea for scenery and climate. If ever it should be my fortune to return to England, I would pass the remainder of my days in the neighbourhood of Swansea."

VI.—The Vale of Neath: Its Abbey, Castle and Waterfalls.

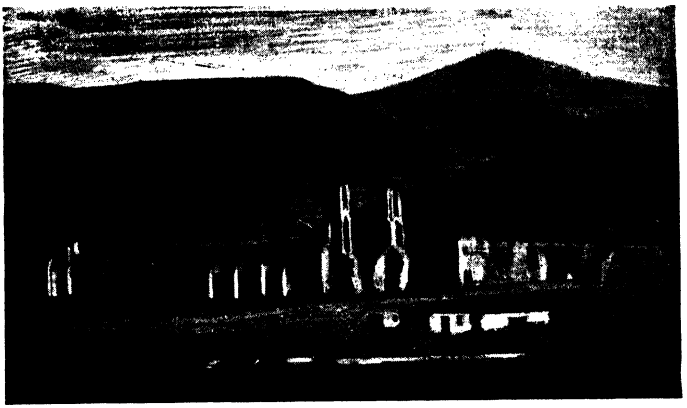
AMONGST the treasures of the Cardiff Free Library, produced for the benefit of privileged visitors by its custodian, is a rare volume entitled "Guide to the Beauties of Glyn Neath." Its author was William Young, and the book is illustrated by a series of charming colour-plates, two of which are now reproduced by special permission. It would be difficult to imagine a more delightful spot for a summer holiday than this fairy-like tract of sylvan scenery where—

> The oak majestic, towers amid the scene,
> The spreading beech, with shining cincture bound,
> The sycamore, with tints of paler green,
> The deep dark fir, with leaf perennial crown'd,
> The noble elm, and ash with foliage light,
> Mixing their tints, with silvery pendant birch,
> A thousand beauties rise, like visions bright,
> Through all the varied ground, to tempt our search.

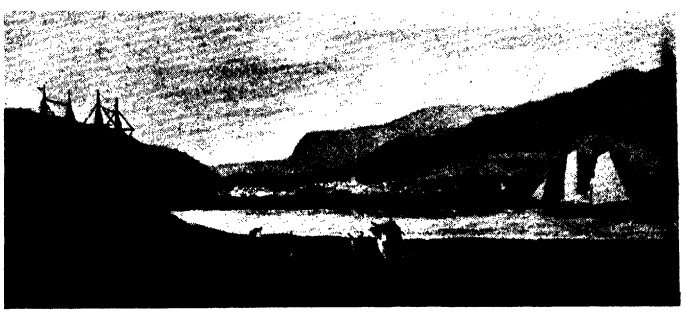
* * * * * *

Mr. Young, who wrote in the pre-railway days of 1835, planned for his readers several days' excursions in and about the Vale he describes with so much grace and power. He makes the "plain, but comfortable," town of Neath their centre and starting-point. The Great Western Railway has, as it were, brought the Vale of Neath to the very gates of Swansea; but whichever plan is adopted, a visit to Neath may be regarded as one of the indispensable features of a tour through SouthWales.

"The founder of Neath Abbey, which was completed A.D. 1129," Mr. Gamwell tells us, "was Richard de Granvil, or Granville, one of the companions of Fitzhamon, and he is said to have been incited to its erection by a dream and an accusing conscience. . . . . In 1540, when Leland visited Neath,

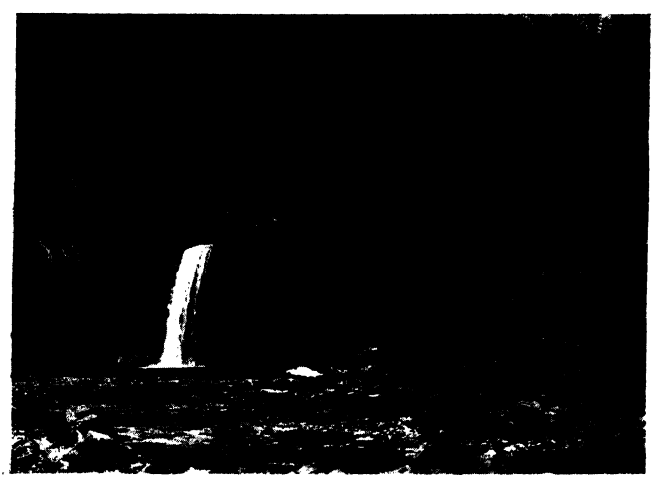


NEATH ABBEY IN 1835.



NEATH IN 1835.

NEATH ABBEY RUINS.



LADY FALL, GLYN NEATH.

he said it was ' an abbey of white monks,' and the ' fairest abbey in all Wales.' " Lewis Morganwg has bequeathed to us a wonderful pen-picture of what the " abbey of white monks " was at the zenith of its prosperity. The Castle of Neath belongs almost to the same period; but to realize the real charm and beauty of the Vale, one must visit Pont-nedd-fechan and spend a time amongst the ferny dales and high waterfalls, the wooded hills and smooth meadows, the tortuous river and romantic gorges, which awaken alike the admiration of both the painter and the poet.

The Great Western Railway Co. have now a convenient road motor service between Neath and Pontardawe.

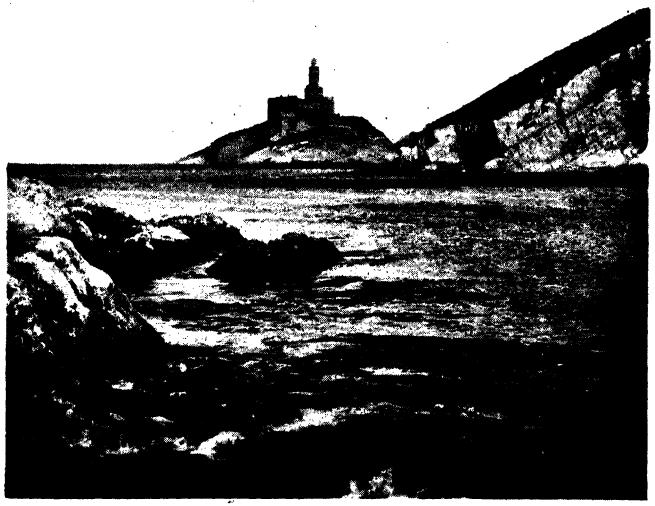
VII.—In Gowerland: From the Mumbles to Worms Head.

GOWERLAND, with its almost unrivalled and greatly diversified coast-line of nearly fifty miles, not only provides Swansea with its favourite watering-place, Oystermouth, but presents so many features of historic and prehistoric interest, and such outstanding natural beauty, that it deserves far more attention than it has hitherto received at the hands of the average holiday-maker from beyond the Rumney River. The Peninsula of Gower projects into the Bristol Channel near its junction with the Atlantic, having a length of twenty miles and a breadth of from five to six. Its area of some eighty square miles includes some forty or fifty villages and churches. It has had an eventful history, extending over well-nigh ten centuries, for it was as far back as 958 A.D. that we hear of the fair land of "Gwyr" being devastated by the Welsh Prince Owain.

Its inhabitants have been from time immemorial divided into Wallenses, the descendants of the British Silures, and Anglicæ, a mixed race of Normans and Flemings. The Duke of Beaufort is now "lord paramount" of Gower, in many ways a veritable *imperium in imperio*, although the traditional dislike of the "Welsherie" and "Englisherie" factions has long since become extinct. In Mr. Morgan's "Wanderings in Gower," as well as in Mr. A. G. Bradley's "In the March and Borderland of Wales," will be found a very interesting account of the strange customs and folk-lore of Gowerland, where the early inhabitants played quoits for small plots of land which they

OYSTERMOUTH CASTLE
From an old print

OYSTERMOUTH CASTLE



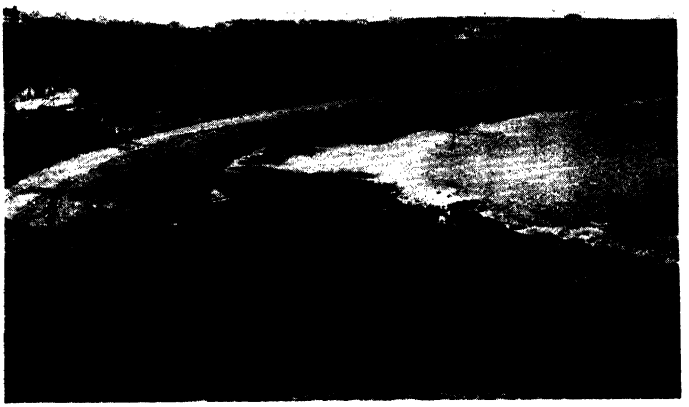
MUMBLES HEAD.

THE PIER, MUMBLES.

staked on the chances of the game. In Oystermouth, Gowerland has an ideal capital, which has grown into importance by leaps and bounds, and is united to Swansea by a light railway. Oystermouth is a wonderfully pleasant and healthy place to stay at, although its present patrons would hardly be content with the somewhat primitive accommodation it possessed in Mr. Gamwell's time, notwithstanding the fact that it had then already become the headquarters of the Bristol Channel Yacht Club. Oystermouth is to Swansea and Neath what Ostend is to Brussels and Bruges. It can no longer be described as a village, and will doubtless soon ambition the dignity of incorporation. To the sturdy pedestrian Bob's Cave and the Mumbles Hills will be a constant source of enjoyment and exercise, while the antiquarian will revel in the venerable Norman castle, which crowns a rounded eminence and was carefully restored by the care of the late Duke of Beaufort. A dozen thrilling stories are related concerning its past history, but none are absolutely authentic, unless it is that about 1300 A.D., " William, the last of the De Braoses, Lords of Gower, carried honest men captives from their homes and immured them in his Castle at Ostramuere, until they paid blackmail, or put their hands to documents in his favour." The ancient church is clearly of Norman origin, and in its shadow is buried Thomas Bowdler, of Bath, the " expurgator " of Shakespeare and Gibbon, who added a new verb, *viz.*, to bowdlerise, to the English language. The close connection between Bath and the shores of Swansea Bay possibly dates from the days of Beau Nash, or maybe the Bath doctors sent their patients (after a course of their own " healing waters ") to complete their cure by the wonderful sea-bathing obtainable on the smooth, hard sand of the Gower coast, from Mumbles Head to the Worm. In 1880, at any rate, the large oysters of Langland Bay, popularly known as " rolers," enjoyed an excellent reputation, and the name of " Brandy Cove " tells its own tale of half-forgotten traditions of contraband. A stay at Oystermouth may be agreeably varied by numerous excursions, including visits to Pennard Castle, whose history seems lost, Bishopston Valley (one of the loveliest spots in Gower), Langland, Caswell Bay and

Oxwich, or going somewhat further afield, to Port Eynon Bay, Culver Hole, Paviland Caves or Worms Head.

In no part of the " County of Castles " will more striking diversity of scenery be met with as in this veritable land of enchantment—the Gower Peninsula, which is fast becoming a popular travel centre. It is traversed by limpid trout streams, and intersected here and there by long lines of heath-clad moors. Nowhere can the breezy uplands of South Wales be seen to greater advantage than in the neighbourhood of Arthur's Stone—which stands on Cefn Bryn. Tradition ascribes its erection to the prodigious strength of King Arthur ; but it is considered more probable that instead of being a cromlech it is a reminder of a geological epoch when the face of this part of Wales underwent a great change. A delightful combination of coast and inland scenery is also to be found in the neighbourhood of the romantic village of Penrice and around Oxwich Castle. Mr. Bradley declares that the finest cliff walk in all Glamorganshire is that which lies between Overton and Rhosilly. At Llangennydd will be found the largest, and one of the most interesting, of Gowerland's ancient churches. Woebly Castle, on the northern side of the peninsula, will also richly repay a visit.



LANGLAND BAY, NEAR SWANSEA.

CASWELL BAY, NEAR SWANSEA.

OLD MAP OF CARMARTHENSHIRE.

KIDWELLY CASTLE.

VIII.—Carmarthen. Kidwelly. Llandovery from Llanelly. The Valleys of the Towy and the Bran.

WE are now in the country of the Golden Grove, where the Earls Cawdor have reigned for two or three generations. Before them were the Vaughans, who took the side of the King during the Civil Wars, and offered a shelter there to Jeremy Taylor. Well-nigh two centuries ago Dyer sang with enthusiasm of the landscapes " ever charming, ever new," " the windy summit wild and high," " the woody valleys warm and low," " the pleasant seat and ruined tower," and in our own time the " Country of Castles " in general, and Carmarthen in particular, have been so graphically described by Mr. A. G. Bradley in his delightful volume entitled " Highways and Byways in SouthWales," that its readers are pretty sure to make up their mind to halt for a few days at Carmarthen, with the view of exploring the picturesque Vale of Towy and seeing something of Dynevor, the great palace-fortress of the " Ravens of Rhys," Carreg Cennin, a Norman stronghold perched on a precipitous rock quite three hundred feet high, and Kidwelly of " the great towers and massive curtains," on the sea coast, but only nine miles by road from the ancient metropolis of Wales. Mr. F. L. Griggs, who illustrates Mr. Bradley's text, gives us a graphic sketch of stately Kidwelly, whose moss-grown walls and lofty gateway still cast their reflection on the placid stream below. Kidwelly is unquestionably one of the historic sites of South

Wales which should be visited at all costs. Those who read Mr. Bradley's narrative of the romance of Kidwelly are likely, if time permits, to follow his advice, and crossing the estuary at the little watering-place of Ferryside, admire the scarce less imposing grandeur of the ruined castle of Llanstephan, perched, like an eagle's nest, high above the clays. The lover of castles will assuredly be in his element as long as he remains at Carmarthen.

Carmarthen itself is a town of no common interest, and still holds its own as the capital of South-west Wales. A mid-Victorian writer said: "The town seems peopled with the ghosts of greatness, the shades of mighty men who have walked its streets, from Roderic the Great, first King of all Wales, to Llewellyn the Great, last of her native princes; from Merlin the Enchanter to St. David, holiest of Welshmen. . . . ." It is Welsh to the backbone; and its market was the last considerable stronghold in all Wales of the Welshwomen's beaver hats and red cloaks, which, as we shall presently see, were long reputed to have done such good service at Fishguard in the stirring days of 1797.

From Carmarthen one can now explore by rail the lovely valley of the Towy as far as Aberayron.

The situation of Carmarthen on the west bank of the Towy adds considerably to its picturesqueness, and the road motor services of the Great Western Railway afford excellent facilities for exploring the district. In Carmarthen the pulse of Welsh public opinion can be pretty accurately felt, and it is there the evergreen Eisteddfod may still be seen and heard at its best. They flourish still at Carmarthen, as they did in the Middle Ages, and, as Mr. Bradley points out, "draw country choirs, local bards and bigger guns still to sing and spout on the sacred ridge that bears the name of Merlin." A yearly visit to Carmarthen is regarded throughout South-west Wales somewhat in the light of a pilgrimage; yet for some unaccountable reason it has remained until now outside the ken of the English holiday-maker or tourist, although it has long been the Mecca of Welsh divines of every shade of opinion, antiquaries of the astute kind,

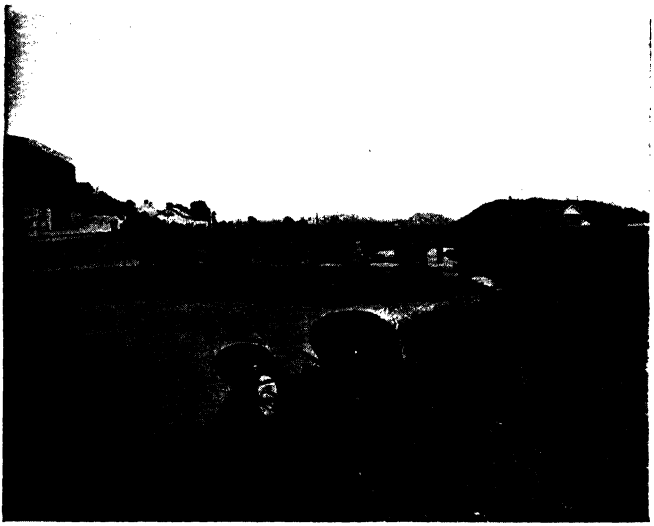
grand-jurymen, educationists, lay delegates—and otter-hunters.

Carmarthen Castle occupies one point of the ridge on which the town stands. It can in no way be compared with either Llanstephan, Carreg Cennin or Kidwelly. Two towers and the outer walls alone remain intact, and they are so obscured by the county jail that little can be seen of them from the town side, while the imposing ramparts, which still look boldly down on the lower Vale of Towy, are so blocked with houses built against them as to entirely ruin the effect. The speedy remedying of this state of things is a task worthy of that public spirit for which Carmarthen is traditionally famous. General Nott, of Cabul fame, was a son of Carmarthen, and returned there to end his days. He now " looks down upon his compatriots from the top of a granite pedestal, immortalized in bronze, and clad in the garb of the first occupants of Caerfyrddin, to wit, the Romans, who had a station here." A lofty obelisk of granite also commemorates the valour of General Picton, another South Wales warrior who fought and fell at Waterloo. In a future chapter Carmarthen will be further alluded to as the starting point for an excursion to the " Garden of Wales "—the coast of Cardigan Bay and its Hinterland.

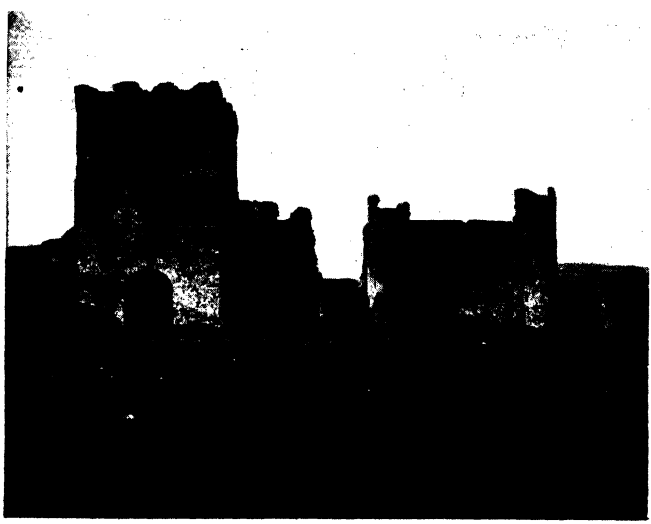
Holiday-makers in general and ardent anglers in particular should remember the superlative attractions of Llandovery and the Valleys of the Towy and the Bran, which may be best reached by breaking the journey westwards at Llanelly (from which station the G.W.R. have a road motor car service to Cross Hands) and travelling thence to Llandovery by way of Pontardulais, Llandilo and Llangadock, the two last-named places being on the verdant banks of the Towy, which is crossed at Llandilo by a bridge, erected at a cost of over £20,000. Llandovery itself is only about thirty miles to the north-east of Llanelly. There are few more charming spots in South Wales than the ancient town, built at the junction of the Bran and the Gwydderig with the Towy, which has already meandered through some twenty miles of narrow mountain gorges and tree-covered ravines on its westward course towards the open country and distant Carmarthen. The very name of Llandovery is derived

from the singular picturesqueness of its position, for Llan-ym-Ddyfri (of which it is a corruption) signifies "the Church amongst the waters." The Vale of Towy, and this portion of it specially so, is, as George Borrow realized half a century ago, famous alike in Welsh life, history and literature, for the sweet-sounding name of Llandovery was familiar alike to Welsh warriors and Welsh bards centuries before the "town of many waters" obtained its first charters from Richard III. and Queen Elizabeth. Borrow speaks of it as "small but beautiful." Its schools are still celebrated throughout the Principality, and it was at Llandovery that the late Lady Charlotte Schreiber printed the *Mabinogion*. In early Stuart times there was no more popular Welsh divine than "Vicar" Rees Pritchard, pulpit-orator, hymn-writer and musician, whose bones rest somewhere in Llandingat churchyard "amongst the waters." The old world hostelry at which George Borrow stayed (and drank whisky and water) still flourishes, and a portion of the keep of the far older feudal stronghold continues to lift its head on the summit of the rock which towers above the swift-flowing Bran. It was built by the Normans eight centuries ago. Fishermen will be glad to hear that Llandovery, from every point of view, meets with the cordial approval of Mr. A. G. Bradley. "Celebrated indeed for all time," he writes, "has the Towy been for the sewin that begin to run in the first July floods; and if there is a finer fish upon the table than a fresh run Towy sewin, I should like to know its species. . . . . Salmon run up it freely and it is well stocked with trout. It is not the brightness of the Towy's streams alone, however, that saves the landscape of the vale from any suspicions of the commonplace. Here and there, above the nearer wooded hills that mostly bound the view, bits of rugged mountain or dark moorland rise in grim contrast against the sky."* The air at Llandovery is pure and bracing, and the town authorities are showing commendable energy in providing amusement as well as good accommodation for the holiday-maker who arrives there in search of health, rest, change or sport.

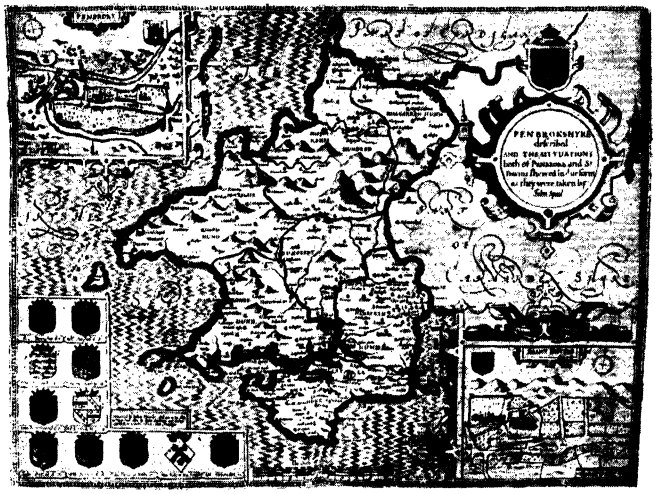
* "Highways and Byways in South Wales," p. 142.



CORACLE MEN, CARMARTHEN.



LLANSTEPHAN CASTLE.



Old Map of Pembrokeshire.

The Harbour, Tenby.

IX.—In Little England beyond Wales. Tenby—An Ideal Holiday Haunt and Touring Centre—A Welsh Riviera.

DYNBYCH-Y-PYSGOD—the Little Town of Fish—was a place of some importance before the days of history-making began. It seems to have been the scene of constant sieges and much bloodshed even after it was colonized by the Flemish and English settlers, who founded Little England beyond Wales and enabled Dynbych-y-Pysgod to blossom out into prosperous Tenby Regis—"the King's town of Tenby," encompassed with strong stone walls and towers by Earl William de Valentia, Lord of Pembroke, to be subsequently strengthened and restored in 1457 by Major Thomas White. "Toun strongly waulid," wrote Leland in Henry VIII.'s reign, "and well gatid, everi Gate having hys Port collis *ex solide ferro*." Queen Elizabeth took the town of Towers and Walls under her gracious protection, and Edward VI. sent the loyal burgesses a fresh charter adorned with a curious archaic portrait of himself. A hundred years later the Merry Monarch presented the Corporation with a couple of splendid maces, the upper portion of the heads being filled with movable lids, so that they may be used on festive occasions as loving-cups.

There are few pleasanter places in the United Kingdom than "Tenby of the King," the sunniest spot in that Little England. The main features of its almost unique position were described by Leland when he described "Tenbigh Toun" as standing on "a main Rokke, but not very hy," and so "gulfed

about by the Severn Se that, at the ful Se, almost the third part of the Toun is in closid with water." If the writers of the Georgian epoch did somewhat scant justice to Tenby, ample amends have been made by their capable successors. Thomas Roscoe exhausts in its favour the vocabulary of unstinted praise. " Fair and fashionable Tenby," exclaim Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall in unison, " one of the prettiest, pleasantest, quietest and in all respects the most attractive of the sea-bathing towns that adorn the coasts of England and Wales." The Halls, it is true, arrived there after a fourteen miles' coach drive from Narberth Road, but this was in 1860, just thirty-five years before Mr. H. T. Timmins made a pilgrimage to Tenby in search of material for his captivating book on the " Nooks and Corners of Pembrokshire." Mr. Timmins, like the authors of " South Wales : the Wye and the Coast," revelled in the " steadfast sunshine " which is unquestionably one of the secrets of Tenby's ever-increasing popularity. Visitors to Tenby need have no fear of even the roughest and most boisterous of gales as, securely sheltered by the high ground of the Ridgeway, they enjoy, across the land-locked waters of Carmarthan Bay, a delightful view of the coast of Gowerland and the more distant highlands of North Devon ; while Caldy Island lies like a breakwater against the waves of the open channel. The hotels at Tenby have adopted every modern improvement and convenience, while still maintaining a commendable moderation in the matter of charges even at the height of the summer and autumn season. Good boarding-houses and comfortable lodgings can easily be found. The museum, if small, is specially interesting and well arranged, and the golf links rank among the best in Wales. Last, but not least, one finds at Tenby a broad expanse of firm, dry golden sand which has certainly no rival on the whole of the Welsh littoral.

This is how Mr. Timmins describes a summer evening in " Tenby of the King " : " Towards sundown a miniature fleet of trawlers sweeps gracefully around the Castle Hill, looking for all the world like a flight of brilliant butterflies ; their russet sails glowing in the warm light of the sun's declining rays with

NORTH SANDS, TENBY.

'Five Arches," Tenby Town Walls.

St. Catherine's Rock, Tenby.

every hue from gold to ruddy purple, recalling memories of gorgeous scenes on far-away Venetian lagoons." Mr. A. G. Bradley, by an entire decade the junior of Mr. H. T. Timmins as a pilgrim to South Wales in search of the picturesque, sums up the manifold attractions tersely, but with an absolute sense of justice. " It is far better known," he writes in his " Highways and Byways," " than any other place in South-West Wales, and one can well understand its popularity, for it is quite out of the commonplace among seaside resorts and full of character. A rocky promontory, on which the ruined castle stands, cuts in into two distinct bays. There are beautiful sands, overhung by a leafy ridge, on whose crest the town stands, commanding to the east and to the west glorious views of the wild coast of Pembrokeshire. Its present reputation is that of a bright and important watering-place, with a considerable residential population, good golf links and excellent bathing, and it requires the grim fragment of the castle rock to remind one that the place played an important part in Welsh history since time began, and ethnologically is a stronghold of the Anglo-Flemish breed and speech."

The exploration of some of the remoter, but not the least interesting and remarkable, recesses of Pembrokeshire is a matter of difficulty except the cheerful and exhilarating Brighton of Little England is adopted as a centre. Then all becomes easy, and a week or fortnight's programme of excursions by road and rail can be promptly arranged, which will soon cause the holiday-maker warmly to congratulate himself that his choice has lighted upon South Wales.

As to Tenby itself, it is well-nigh impossible to turn without the eye lighting on some object of antiquarian interest. A whole morning should be devoted to a visit to the Church and the Castle ; the walls and towers (some of which still bear the E.R., not of Edwardus Rex, but of Elizabetha Regina) should be carefully examined, as they are in some ways almost equal to those of Chester ; then Caldy Island certainly deserves a visit, and so forth.

Why should not Tenby have a winter as well as a summer

season? Is Tenby predestined at no distant date to vie with Cornwall as a home Riviera? Let the following official meteorological statistics for the years 1921, 1922 and 1923 speak for themselves :—

METEOROLOGICAL OBSERVATORY, TENBY, 1923.

METEOROLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS DURING 1921, 1922, 1923.

TOTAL SUNSHINE HOURS.

Years.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
1921.	31.2	81.2	91.4	244.4	242.8	277.7	242.1	162.3	176.6	113.8	68.4	45.9
1922.	50.5	75.6	154.3	65.0	228.6	219.2	181.6	132.3	122.6	133.2	59.6	36.0
1923.	50.7	65.0	126.1	155.3	218.7	181.9	159.1	191.0	147.8	97.8	106.8	52.4

TOTAL INCHES RAINFALL.

1921.	5.17	0.16	38.3	1.04	1.91	0.03	1.96	53.6	1.50	2.38	3.71	2.72
1922.	4.62	4.67	4.05	3.23	1.41	1.42	4.18	3.79	4.81	1.06	1.93	5.21
1923.	2.87	9.04	1.25	3.60	1.87	0.89	3.37	3.74	2.96	4.17	4.00	4.28

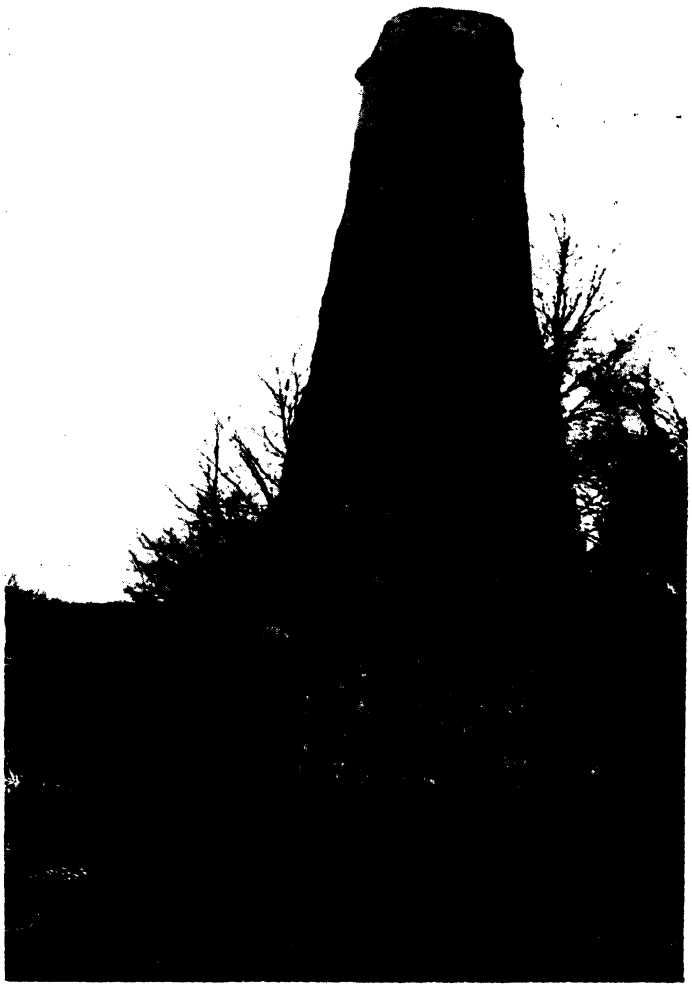
MEAN MAXIMUM TEMPERATURE ..	1921 .. 59.2	1922 .. 55.1	1923 .. 55.5
MEAN MINIMUM TEMPERATURE ..	1921 .. 44.2	1922 .. 42.2	1923 .. 44.6
MEAN TEMPERATURE ..	1921 .. 52.4	1922 .. 48.6	1923 .. 50.1

TOTAL SUNSHINE..	1921 .. 1777.8	1922 .. 1455.8	1923 .. 1552.5 hours.
NO. DAYS WHICH SUN SHONE ON ..	1921 .. 299	1922 .. 299	1923 .. 292
NO. DAYS WITHOUT RAIN	1921 .. 206	1922 .. 156	1923 .. 164
TOTAL RAINFALL FOR YEAR	1921 .. 29.77	1922 .. 40.38	1923 .. 42.04 inches

DOROTHY G. TRUSCOTT,
Meteorological Observer.

TENBY.

STACKPOLE COURT.



FLEMISH CHIMNEY.

Those who are interested in ethnology and the scientific reason why in Tenby we are not foreigners, as at Carmarthen, but as it were, compatriots and "citizens of one city," should dive as deeply as may be into the pages of the readable "History of Little England beyond Wales"; but as golfers are just now far more numerous amongst holiday-makers than ethnologists, the following note on the Tenby Golf Club and its links is given for their information and guidance:—

The course of eighteen holes is situated on the burrows within one hundred yards of Tenby station. The turf through the course is of the seaside type, and the greens are of excellent quality, water is laid on to every green.

The hazards and bunkers are all natural, and consist of sand-hills, bent grass and sand-pits.

The holes vary in length from 500 yards to 130 yards.

The course is a very sporting one, and is always dry. The Secretary will be glad to give any information to intending visitors.

One of the pleasantest features connected with a sojourn in Tenby, be it long or short, is the endless variety of excursions which can be made during one's stay there. "Nowhere," once wrote a contributor to *Harper's Magazine*, "does the Welsh coast gambol with wider eccentricity than at or about Tenby." Saundersfoot is no longer a "pleasing village," as it is generally described by the writers of the "sixties," but a full-blown and very prosperous watering-place. It should certainly be visited. Half a dozen writers at least wax eloquent over Tenby's "most delightful trip," viz., the lengthy drive embracing St. Govan's, the Huntsman's Leap, the far-famed "Stacks" and the mansion of Stackpole. "The scenery," write Mr. and Mrs. Hall, "is wild, and if not sublime, astonishingly grand. . . . There are two roads—one through Penally and Lydstep follows the undulating line of coast; the other longer, but more agreeable, is over the Ridgeway and through Pembroke. In both cases the tourist passes Stackpole Court, which occupies the site of the baronial residence of the old crusader Elidor de Stackpole. It was garrisoned 'for the King'

during the Civil Wars. There (amongst other treasures) is still preserved a Hirlas Horn, or drinking cup, the contents of which guests were at one time expected to quaff at a draught." In Stackpole Court hangs the Reynolds portrait of the first Lord Cawdor (see p. 55), who, in 1797, acted so entirely in accordance with the time-honoured traditions of his Scotch ancestors, as well as those associated with the ancient owners of Stackpole.

In Pembrokeshire the geologist will discover as fertile a field for his researches as the antiquarian, the student of architecture, or the lover of folk-lore.

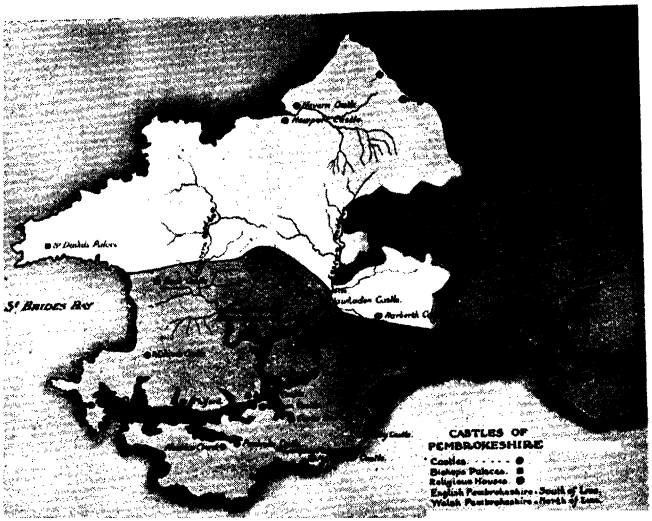
X.—In the Heart of the Country of Castles. Carew, Pembroke and Manorbier.

BEFORE setting out on any of the pleasant excursions for which Tenby will be found a most convenient centre, it would be wise to purchase a handy illustrated booklet entitled " The Castles of Pembrokeshire," by Mr. T. R. Dawes, M.A., published by Mr. J. E. Arnett, at whose library it may be procured. In the sketch map now reproduced by Mr. Dawes' permission, in which the exact configuration of the two race-sections of the county is clearly defined, Pembrokeshire is shown to possess at least eighteen castles, three episcopal palaces and three great religious houses, to say nothing of Celtic, Roman Danish, and other earthworks innumerable. An attempt to describe or even enumerate the whole of these interesting memorials of an eventful past within the compass of the present work is obviously impossible. Some of them will be alluded to in future chapters. Meanwhile, holiday-makers may be glad to know that the splendid ruins of the Castles of Carew, Pembroke and Manorbier, as well as those of Lamphey Palace, are well within the compass of a day's drive, and that the road leading to them is suitable for either cyclists or motorists. Leaving Tenby at about 10.30 a.m., you can arrange a picnic lunch at either Carew or Pembroke, and reach home in good time for dinner. From start to finish one enjoys an uninterrupted series of beautiful views, while objects of interest are revealed to the sight at every turn of the road. Here you see an unmistakable Flemish chimney doing duty as a parish oven; then comes a quaint farm, or still quainter mill, which looks as if it

had been transplanted bodily to Wales from the Low Countries, while just beyond is one of the causeways, or " causays," which form a conspicuous feature in the landscapes of " Little England beyond Wales." Passing Gumfreston church, with its three holy wells, and traversing the verdant Vale of Florence, you once more approach the shore, and the ruins of Carew Castle rise abruptly and majestically before the eyes of the delighted traveller.

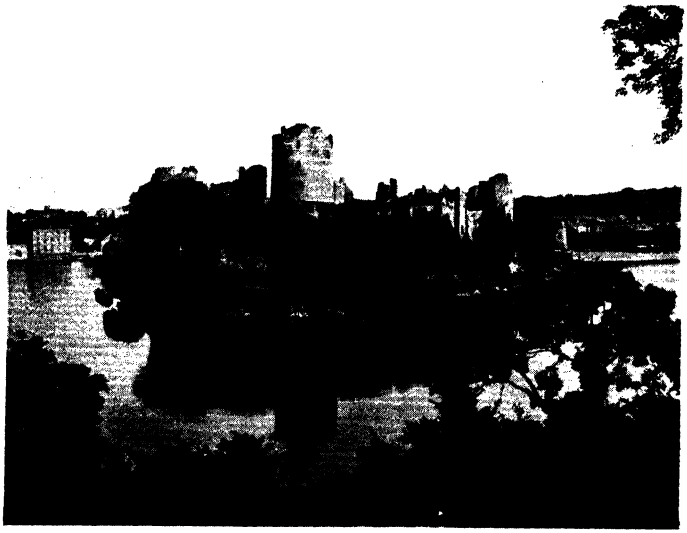
Mr. Dawes has a good deal to tell us of the vanished glories of Carew and its early possessors. " Sir Rhys ap Thomas, who built a great part of the castle, is one of the most splendid figures in Welsh history, and it was he, a Welsh knight, who was chiefly instrumental in placing the Welsh king, Henry VII., on the throne of England. Sir Rhys was ever a lover of gorgeous pageantry, and the crowning glory of his life was the famous pageant and tournament at Carew Castle in April, 1507, at which over 1,000 guests were present, among whom were included the chief men of ' good rank and quality,' the Bishop of St. Davids, the Abbot of Talley and the Prior of Carmarthen." Sir Rhys was, as might be expected, a prime favourite with Henry VII., who owed his throne in a great measure to his assistance, and in the next reign was one of those who accompanied " King Hal " to the Field of the Cloth of Gold. In five short years the brief prosperity of the ap Thomases came to an end. Sir Rhys's studious grandson died on Tower Hill, and Carew Castle was forfeited to the Crown.

From Carew you push on to Pembroke, where at least a couple of hours should be devoted to the exploration of the dismantled fortress which recalls the times when the Earls of Pembroke played a great part in the history of England. Strongbow set out from his castle of Pembroke to conquer Ireland. William Marshall, another Earl, who was described as the ruler of King and Kingdom, forced King John to sign Magna Charta. In the seventeenth century the Kings of England were styled " Kings of England and Earls of Pembroke." It is impossible to sketch its history, however briefly. For long centuries it was the Gibraltar of South Wales. Even Llewelyn and Owen



MAP OF THE CASTLES OF PEMBROKESHIRE.

GUMFRESTON CHURCH.



PEMBROKE CASTLE.

CAREW CASTLE.

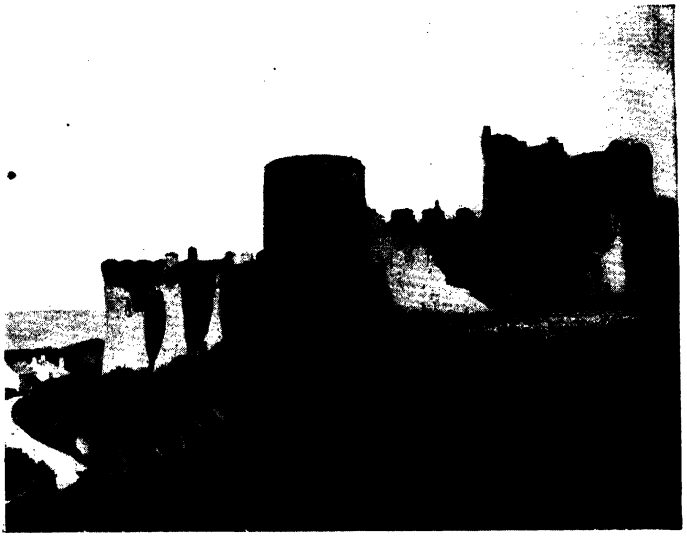
Glendower hesitated to attack it, and it was finally left to Oliver Cromwell, the great destroyer of castles, to humble its pride. The town of Pembroke is built on a ridge, which culminates in a great mass of limestone rock, whose sides descend precipitously some hundred feet to the tidal waters of the Cleddau. On this rock, itself a great natural fortress, has grown up the great Castle of Pembroke. The castle follows the natural configuration of the rock, and consists of curtain walls protected by towers, and in one of these, the Gatehouse Tower, Henry VII. was born. The great keep, built by William Marshall in the reign of John, is nearly eighty feet high, and is one of the finest examples of a round keep in Britain. The buildings at the N.E. corner date from the sixteenth century, when Jasper Tudor made great additions to the castle, so that it might be a fit residence for the Earls of Pembroke. A unique feature in Pembroke Castle is its celebrated Wogan cave. From the grounds, and still more so from the higher portions of the Castle, a fine view is obtained across the river of the Bush, the historic home of the Meyricks, one of the oldest families in Wales, claiming descent from the Welsh kings who once ruled over the Principality. "Bush" has been twice burned, but has been rebuilt in the Tudor style, by the father of its present possessor, the late Sir Thomas Meyrick, whose name will always be honourably associated with the story of the South African War, in which he lost two of his sons.

Returning to Tenby along the Ridgeway, you halt to visit the ruins of Lamphey Palace, close to Lamphey Court, the residence of the Mathiases, and then press on towards the bend of the road, at which you come suddenly upon the full splendour of what Mr. Dawes calls "the turreted pride of Manorbier." Manorbier Castle has probably altered very little in appearance since the fifteenth century. When Llewelyn and Cromwell battered Narberth, when Haverfordwest was dismantled, when Poyer surrendered Pembroke after a two months' siege, Manorbier in his snug retreat seems to have been sheltered from the storms of war, and history tells us of no attack upon Manorbier. It was here that Giraldus Cambrensis, the

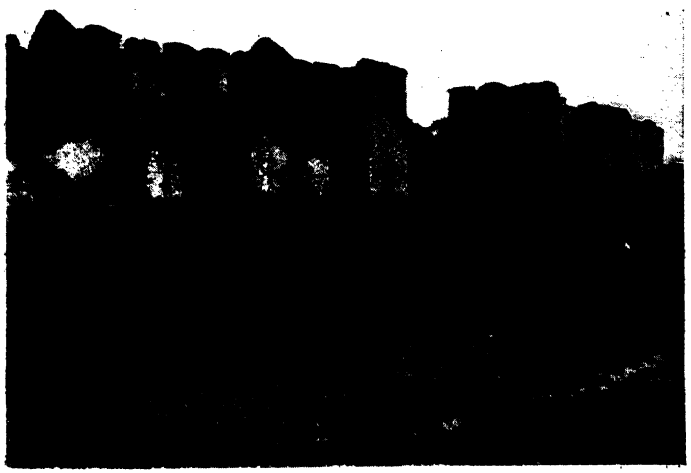
mediaeval historian of Wales, was born. " When you have passed through the drawbridge and under the portcullis," writes the author of " The Castles of Pembrokeshire," " what a beautiful picture presents itself :—a lovely lawn like that of an Oxford Quadrangle, walls grey with age, half-covered with ivy, battlements and towers from whose nooks and crannies peep ferns and flowers. At the south-east is the chapel, then the banqueting hall, the kitchen with a fireplace where an ox could be roasted whole, the prisoners' quarters, and in the wall the clamp to which the prisoners were chained ; the well thirty feet deep, and even apparatus for melting lead."

From the walls of Manorbier you see the valley falling to the little bay where the white line of waves breaks on the sand ; to the west the stream flowing through marshy land, once beautiful ponds stocked with fish ; the round tower beyond is the columbarium or dove-house, and looking back you have the gate tower on which the evening sun falls, and the curtain walls with the corner tower in which Giraldus was born."

You return to " Tenby of the King " possibly a trifle tired, but deeply impressed with all you have seen in the heart of the " Country of Castles." Before dinner is over you will doubtless have decided to prolong your stay there, with a view to visiting Narberth and Llawhaden, prior to setting out on a pilgrimage to the shrine of St. David.



MANORBIER CASTLE.



LAMPHEY PALACE RUINS.

PICTON CASTLE

MILFORD HAVEN.

XI.—Milford Haven and the Town and County of Haverfordwest.

WHEN the Pembroke Dock steam-ferry has taken you across the broad estuary which may almost be said to dissect this portion of the "Country of Castles," you are still in "Little England beyond Wales," nor have you quitted it when you arrive by rail at Haverfordwest, which enjoys the distinction of being a county within a county, having its own Lord-Lieutenant, Sheriff and Assizes, and a Corporation as old as the somewhat gloomy fortress which still towers above the steep roofs of its old-fashioned houses. The shores of Milford Haven are thickly studded with mediaeval strongholds. Benton and Picton are both worth a visit, but neither of them is as supremely interesting as that of Haverfordwest, which still dominates a town whose history vies with that of Carnarvon or Carmarthen. A contemporary writer speaks of Haverfordwest as "solitary, slow and sleepy," but he forgets that numerous Princes of Wales have been also Lords of Haverford, and that the "county" has enjoyed "very singular privileges and liberties" ever since the end of the fifteenth century. The Perrotts exercised great influence over the destinies of Haverfordwest in those days. In Queen Elizabeth's reign Sir John Perrott, Lord Deputy of Ireland, resided there, "keeping up great state," and Sir Herbert Perrott, the friend and contemporary of Addison, said to have been the original of Sir Roger de Coverley, also hailed from Haverfordwest. The picturesque ruins of the old priory of the Order of Black Canons by the riverside are well worth exploring. It will be a pleasant walk

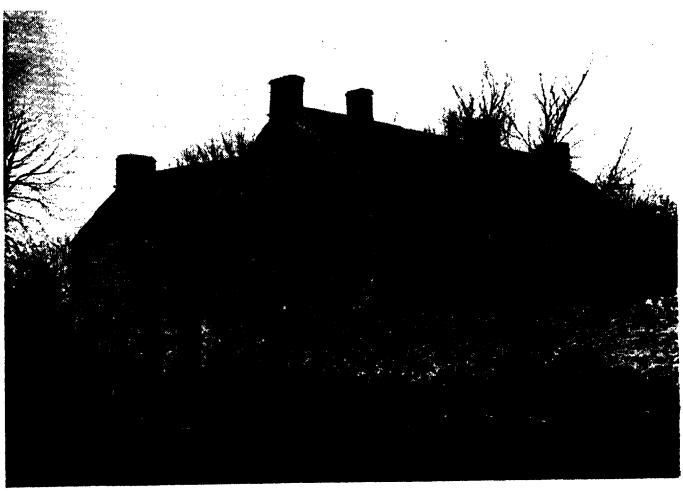
across the greenest of green meadows, after you have seen all there is to see of the still stately castle, built originally by "Strongbow," Gilbert de Clare, first Earl of Pembroke, as a protection to the English settlement (the name "Little England beyond Wales" had not been coined in those days) against the incursions of the hardy mountaineers, who had been driven back by the advancing "immigrants" upon the wild fastnesses of the interior. It will be a fitting preparation for the coming pilgrimage to the Cathedral of St. David in the Desert—sixteen miles almost due west—to visit in turn the ancient Haverfordwest churches of St. Martin "of the slender crooked spire," of St. Mary, with its battered and mutilated effigy of the pilgrim who has crossed the seas to the Spanish shrine of St. James of Compostella, and last, but not least, of St. Thomas, where the larger of the two bells bears the legend, "Sanctus Gabriel ora pro nobis," and the eye lights on the tomb of Richard the Palmer, who in days so remote as the time of Giraldus Cambrensis, accomplished a journey to Rome. He need not have gone so far afield, for tradition hath it (and tradition is sometimes truthful) that two pilgrimages over the seventeen intervening hills to St. David's was regarded as a satisfactory equivalent for one to the great city of St. Peter. It must not be forgotten that Goffe, one of the most brilliant of Cromwell's generals, and one of Charles I.'s judges, was a native of Haverfordwest. As the hero of "the legend of the Angel's Oak," his personality has a deep interest for all Americans versed in the traditions of the settlement of the New England States.

Milford is one of the greatest centres of the trawling industry. The visitor will be interested in the scene at the dock quayside where is handled the harvest of the sea gathered in the great west fishing grounds. From Milford Haven the Great Western Railway carries nearly 50,000 tons of fish yearly by express train services.

HAVERFORDWEST CASTLE IN 1799.

BRIDGE AND CASTLE, HAVERFORDWEST.

NEWGALE SANDS.
From an old engraving.



LITTLE TREFFGARNE, THE SUPPOSED BIRTHPLACE
OF OWEN GLENDOWER.

XII.—"Far from the Madding Crowd." Excursions from Haverfordwest. A Visit to the Village City.

ON leaving Haverfordwest you enter a country aglow with fern, wild flowers and plants of every description, indicative of a mild climate. Nowadays nine holiday-makers out of ten pass on with feverish haste to St. David's, regardless of the state of the roads, which, after all, it must be honestly confessed, has been greatly exaggerated. It was not always so, for of the eighteenth century writers of travel-books, Sotheby seems to have been almost the only one who journeyed in the wilderness beyond the belt of verdure, saw the then ruined and roofless cathedral on the "desolate shore" with his own eyes, and dedicated a few sonorous lines to the "sequestered shrine" and

> ". . . the billowy sea, and the bleak winds that rush
> Through the rent arches of the aisle."

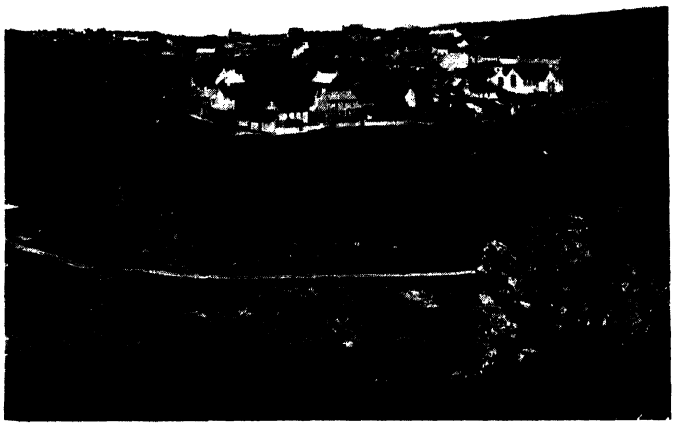
Sotheby has left us no illustration of St. David's as it was in 1794, but Alken's charming aquatint of Newgale Sands strongly tempts one to follow the example set some few years ago by Mr. Timmins and devote a day or even more to seeing as much as possible of St. Bride's Bay, Marloes and the Dale Country, before starting for the famous "village-city" of the west. Fishguard and Goodwick must of course both be visited, not only by reason of their natural beauty, but on account of their past historical associations and their present growing importance. They may be approached by various routes. Mr. Bradley arrived there from the north through St. Dogmaels and the "Lordship of Kemaes"; Mr. Timmins elected to follow "the iron-bound coast" from St. David's; but there is another road from Haverfordwest, traversing a district of much interest and great fertility, and enabling those who adopt it to see some-

thing of Poyston House (the birthplace of Picton), Treffgarne Bridge, the "Lion" and "Lamb" Rocks, Little Treffgarne House (the reputed early home of Owen Glendower), and the oft-described Treffgarne Pass, the last post he held against the enemy. It may, however, be more convenient to make this a return route, and go first to St. David's, undeterred by the terrors of the "seventeen hills in sixteen miles."

Since the last issue of this volume, motor services have been organized by the G.W.R. between Haverfordwest and St. David's; and Mathry-road station to St. David's. The Mathry-road route is considerably shorter, and at the station, which is on the main line to Fishguard, several trains stop daily for the convenience of visitors to St. David's.

As you proceed on your pilgrimage from Haverfordwest you enjoy frequent glimpses of charming scenery both by sea and land, and that long after you have left the wild-flowers, ferns and luxuriant foliage which characterize the Vale of the Cleddau River behind you. Now and then you obtain a peep of the distant Precelly Hills and the rocks of Treffgarne. When the journey is nearly half over there rises abruptly to the right the lofty, isolated tower of Roch Castle, built by stalwart Adam de Rupe six centuries ago to dominate the "marches" forming the frontier of the "Little England beyond Wales" you have enjoyed so thoroughly and are now about to quit. The bridge over Newgale Brook is crossed, and you are indeed in Wales and well on your way to the shrine of the Saint, whose emblem is the leek. Lower and Upper Solva are soon passed; a brief halt enables you to enjoy the wide-stretching view of Ramsey Isle, Carn Llidi and Pen Beri, and a rolling treeless country is entered, parallel with the course of the Via Julia (the Roman road from Carmarthen).

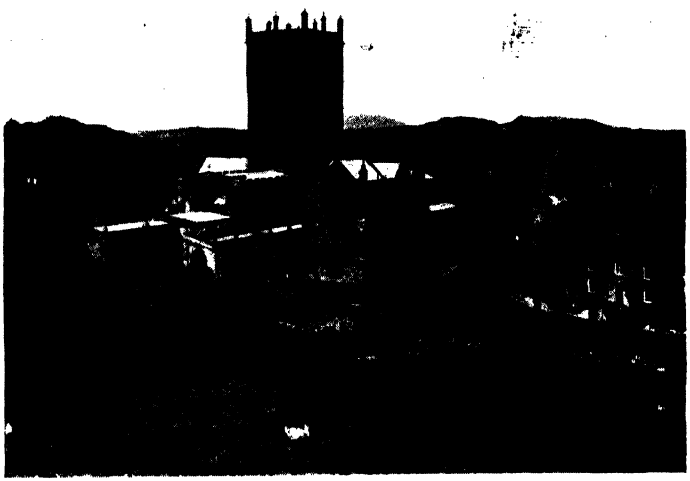
Passing through the one long street of the smallest cathedral town of the Empire, you come to an ancient cross, around which on high days and holidays, up till comparatively recent times, a number of comely Welsh women in their tall hats might often be seen. Beyond it a square embattled edifice, storm-beaten and grey with age, and apparently springing from



UPPER SOLVA.

LOWER SOLVA.

NUN'S WELL BAY, ST. DAVID'S.



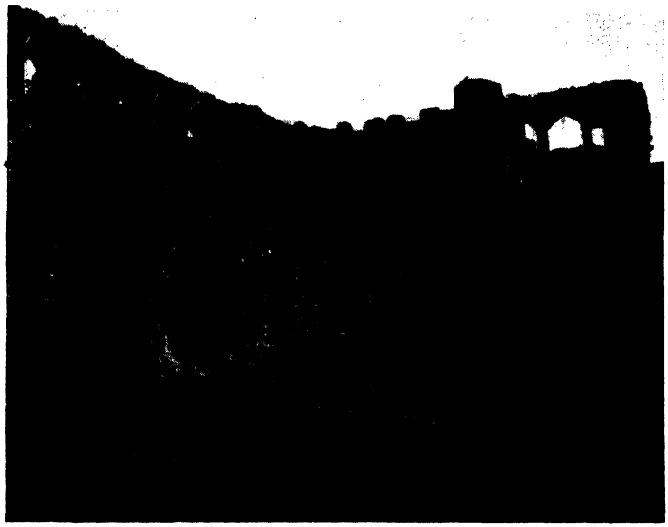
ST. DAVID'S CATHEDRAL FROM N.E.

nowhere, comes suddenly in view. It proves to be nothing less than the upper portion of the stately central tower of the magnificent cathedral of St. David, standing at the foot of the broad staircase of the "Thirty-nine Articles," in the sombre valley below, and accessible only on foot through a cobble-paved lane lined with ancient houses, and generally known as the "Popples" (Pebbles). Probably there is no sight in the United Kingdom more weirdly impressive than that presented by Ty Dewi—the "village-city" of the West, over which William Laud exercised episcopal rule prior to his promotion to the primacy. It is a living Pompeii, a lasting memorial of the glories of the age which gave Wales such prelate-architects as Bishop Gower, such buildings as St. Mary's College, and an episcopal palace sufficiently spacious to accommodate simultaneously the occupant of every see in Europe. The cathedral of St. David is no longer either ruined or roofless. No other British cathedral than this has a stall in the choir specially set apart for the King of these realms. Here are to be seen, enclosed in an oaken chest, the relics of St. David and his contemporary, St. Justinian; the portable altar which St. David brought from Jerusalem on his return from his consecration as Bishop, and the altar in the lovely chapel of the Holy Trinity at which he celebrated the Holy Mysteries.

The accompanying illustrations can only give a faint idea of what may be seen at St. David's. For a more detailed description of the restored Cathedral and the awe-inspiring ruins which encircle it, the traveller should look to the Great Western Railway publication "Cathedrals." The pilgrim will visit with additional pleasure Gower's "incomparable palace," the "college of the slender tower," and wander at will amongst gems of mediaeval sculpture and rich and sumptuous shrines like those of David, Patron Saint of Wales, of "Henricus Gower, Episcopalis Palatii Constructor," and of Edmund Tudor, father of Henry VII. The four hundredth anniversary of the day when he was laid to rest beneath the table of massive marble brought from the distant Isle of Purbeck is now past; but one can still read the proud inscription, "under this Marble Shrine here enclo'd resteth the Bones of that noble Lord, Edmund

Earl of Richmond, Father and Brother to Kings, the which departed out of this World in the year of Lord God a thousand four hundred fifty and six, the first day of the Month of November, on whose soul Almighty Jesus have mercy. Amen." The beautifully decorated doorway of the south porch, Peter de Leia's solid cylindrical pillars, Bishop Gower's splendid rood-screen and tomb, " sparkling with cusps and crockets," will all be admired in turn, but one must not neglect the enjoyment of the grim monkish humour of the carved " miserere " seats, or the strange symbolism of which every pillar-base capital or gargoyle is the interpreter. What will strike the visitor is the wonderful flat roof of oak in the Nave, presented by Treasurer Pole, and the fine heraldic decoration of the roof of the lantern. And he will be interested also in the table of bishops of this great See, containing the names of men who have left a creditable mark on the pages of history.

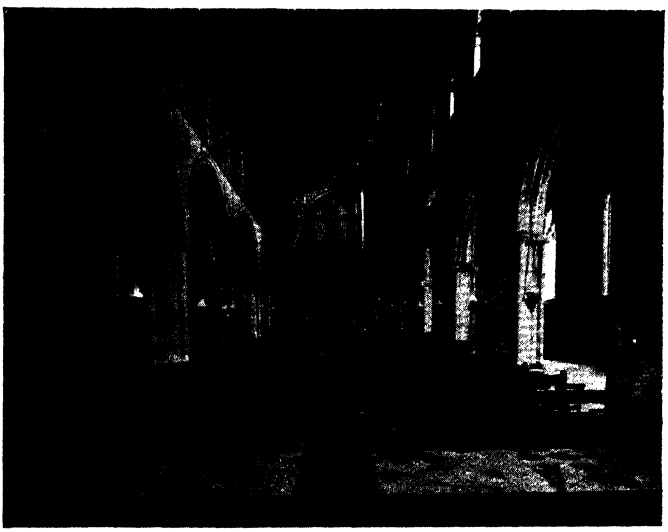
The bathing, shooting and fishing at St. David's are all far above the average, and good lodgings are easily procurable. Archbishop Laud once reigned over the " village-city." He was a lover of " right merry sports " even on Sunday. Some say this predilection told against him when tried for his life. Be this as it may, modern athleticism at St. David's receives generous support and encouragement from all the Cathedral dignitaries. The Golf Course is about twenty minutes' walk from the city. There is a nine-hole course, the longest a little over 300 yards and the shortest 150. The links stand on the Burrows, the site of the ancient Roman city of Menevia—a romantic undulating piece of ground, and at the same time an ideal natural golf course, with natural bunkers everywhere, and soft, dry, elastic turf on a sandy subsoil. They overlook Whitesand Bay and Ramsey Island and Sound, and are dominated by a rocky hill called Carn Llidi. The rules of the Club facilitate the admission of monthly and weekly members, and a day's play may be obtained at the cost of one shilling. It is difficult to imagine a more suitable spot for links ; the air, 250 feet above the sea-level, is peculiarly bracing, and the turf, on account of the sandy nature of the soil, is always dry.



RUINS OF BISHOP'S PALACE, ST. DAVID'S CATHEDRAL.

'THIRTY-NINE ARTICLES" STAIRCASE, ST. DAVID'S CATHEDRAL.

INTERIOR, ST. DAVID'S CATHEDRAL.
From an old print.



THE NAVE, ST. DAVID'S CATHEDRAL.

XIII.—The Direct Short Sea Route to Ireland via Fishguard and Rosslare. Fishguard; Its Past, Present and Future.

THE important changes foreshadowed in the earlier editions of the "County of Castles" have taken place, and Fishguard is now the point of departure of the magnificent turbine steamers (fitted with wireless telegraphy) which ply between the Welsh and Irish coasts, bringing the whole of the South of Ireland and its unrivalled "Lakes and Landscapes" and other natural and historic attractions within easy reach of every class of holiday-maker. In Fishguard and its neighbourhood the holiday-maker will find a travel-centre of more than ordinary interest, for the country abounds in prehistoric remains and relics of both the British and Roman occupation of the soil. At Fishguard and Goodwick you can find an agreeable alternation of climate, and so pure and healthy is the air that the historian Giraldus in praising it wrote, "the inhabitauntes are seldome subjecte to infirmities whereby the people live longe and contynue verie perfecte of healthe and memorye."

The adaptation of the primitive facilities of a past generation to the exigencies of the new order of things necessitated the accomplishment of one of the most important and costly engineering achievements of modern times. When over half a century ago, Brunel was planning the route for the South

Wales section of the Great Western Railway, of which he had become engineer in 1833, he concluded that the most desirable point for the western terminus of that line would be found at Fishguard Bay, a fine stretch of water on the northern coast of the County of Pembrokeshire, and forming the southern point of Cardigan Bay. There was much to recommend this project. Between Pen Anglas and Dinas Head, the two bold headlands which stand at the entrance of Fishguard Bay, there is a distance of seven miles, and within the limits of the area thus formed the largest navies of the world could find accommodation in deep water, requiring only a breakwater to complete the protection already afforded on three sides of the bay by hills rising to a height of some 300 feet. From Fishguard, again, the distance across St. George's Channel to the Irish coast is only 54 nautical miles, so that, from a geographical point of view, Fishguard Bay appeared to be specially adapted by Nature for a "short sea route" to Ireland and the formation of an important port of call.

But there were physical difficulties which, for a time, proved insuperable. The most desirable point for the construction of the proposed harbour was on the southern shores of the bay: but here the waves washed against the base of hills rising sheer out of the water to a height of over 300 feet, and formed of the hardest of rock. The construction of a harbour, therefore, in addition to the provision of a breakwater, meant a very costly undertaking indeed, and, in the result, Brunel's plans were altered, the main line of the Great Western Railway being continued, instead, to Milford Haven, whence the steamers for Ireland for many years prior to August, 1906, went to Waterford, a distance of 98 nautical miles, and to Cork, a distance of 139 miles.

Before the Fishguard route to Ireland became an accomplished fact, a huge slice was blasted from the side of the surrounding hills, and with the space thus cleared, and the building up of new-made ground by constructing a quay wall in the bay, and filling it in, an area was gained sufficient for the provision of extensive quay space, railway station buildings, running lines and sidings (a length of six miles in all), cattle pens, stabling, power house, offices, marine department depot, electric cranes, and

all the other necessaries and conveniences of an up-to-date port.

At first the engineers had to cart their machinery, etc., a distance of seven miles to the top of a hill known as Pen Cw, a height of 300 feet above sea-level, whence workers and implements were lowered by ropes to a point where the task of clearing or blasting could be commenced, space being thus gradually gained for the carrying on of the work on a more extensive scale. But, before the scheme was completed, over 3,000,000 tons of rock had to be removed from the sides of the hills, as much as 130,000 tons being, in some instances, displaced by a single explosion. The rock thus obtained has, however, been of invaluable service. Much of it has gone in the construction of the breakwater. Originally designed and now constructed to a length of 3,000 feet, the structure has a breadth of 300 feet at the base and 70 feet at the top, and each foot of its length has only been gained by the " dumping down " of about 650 tons of rock, mostly the largest pieces available. Smaller pieces of the rock have been used for the filling in of the quay, or, crushed to the required size, have gone to form ballast, or been utilized for other purposes.

The quay space already available has a length of 1,120 feet, which will allow of three large steamers lying alongside the wall at one time, but there is a further 1,000 feet which can be utilized for extensions. From the quay wall to the present base of the hills there is a depth of 260 feet available for the various installations of the port. Fishguard Harbour station adjoins the point of departure or arrival for the Irish steamers, and in going from boat to train passengers have only a few yards to walk, the intervening rails being crossed by movable traversers. A gallery along the lower part of the sea wall, and connecting with a subway leading to the surface level, facilitates the landing of cattle, and their passage direct to the pens, independently of all other traffic.

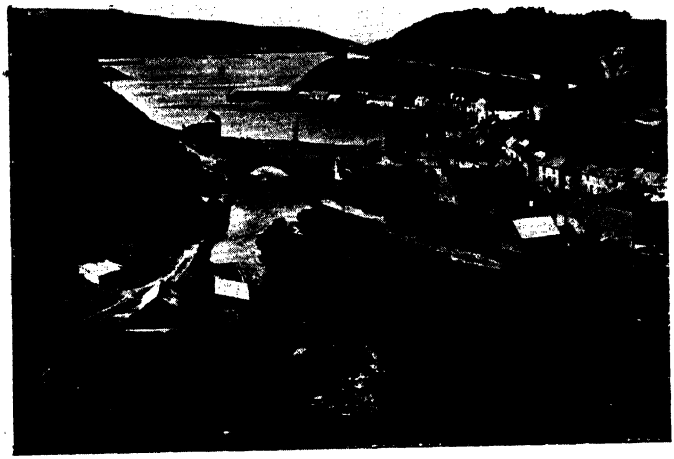
Ample refreshment and waiting-room accommodation is provided at the Harbour station. On a commanding position above the quays, and overlooking the bay, the Great Western Railway Company have under their own management a

convenient and up-to-date hotel ("The Fishguard Bay") where travellers desirous of exploring the attractions of the neighbourhood will find every comfort. While there, you can enjoy a delightful panorama of the hills and cliffs of Fishguard across the bay, stretching out seawards in the direction of the bold outline of Dinas Head, with the dimmest vision of Cardigan Head in the hazy distance. So mild is the climate in winter that even in the remote past we are told that "straungers resorted thither from the inland partes of England." From the vantage ground about the Fishguard Bay Hotel, the ever-changing colours of the sky, sea and mountain, and sunlit waters dotted with white sails, and the busy harbour beneath, form a delightful panoramic picture.

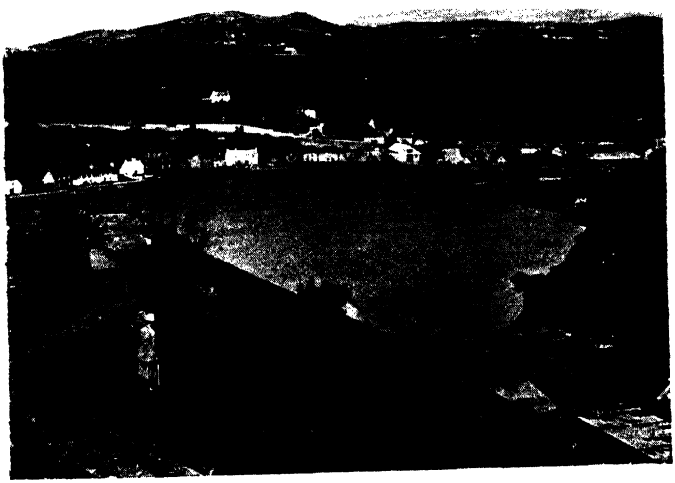
The Company have secured for visitors staying at the Hotel, exclusive fishing rights over three miles of strictly preserved water of the river Gwaen. This river passes through scenery of exceptional beauty, and flows into the sea at Old Fishguard Harbour.

Arrangements have also been made by which visitors to Fishguard Bay Hotel can fish in ten miles of preserved water of the Western Cleddau. This river also affords excellent Trout and Sewin Fishing, with Salmon at certain seasons. Both the Cleddau and the Gwaen are easily accessible from the Fishguard Bay Hotel.

Just over one hundred years ago the name of Fishguard was on everybody's lips, although prior to the celebration in 1897 of the centenary of the stirring event of February, 1797, not one person in ten thousand could, in all human probability, explain the reason for the appearance of the word on the caps of one corps at least of the Welsh Militia. As a matter of fact, Fishguard witnessed the only attempt at the practical execution of the threat of French invasion which kept the whole country in trepidation between 1796 and 1805, when Napoleon broke up his camp at Boulogne, and Nelson's victory at Trafalgar rendered any serious repetition of the Fishguard experiment an impossibility. The discovery of important dispatches throwing new light on the three days' Welsh War of 1797 was first mentioned in the

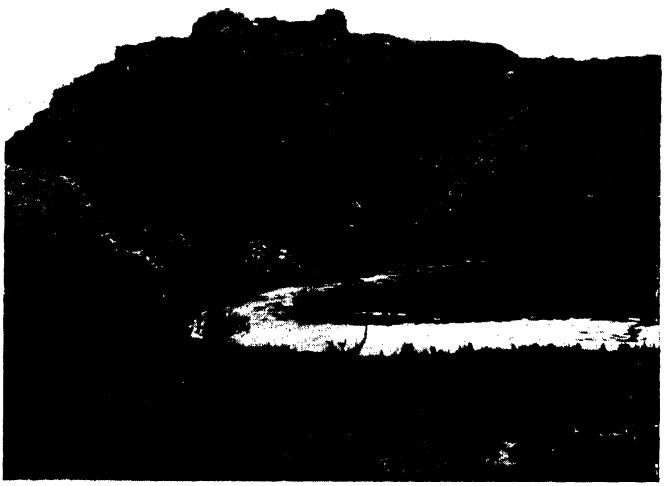


FISHGUARD.



VIEW OF FISHGUARD FROM SLADE.

G.W.R. Fishguard Bay Hotel.



Treffgarne Rocks, Fishguard.

original edition of this volume, when the historic interest belonging to the opening up of the romantic Treffgarne Pass by the enterprise of the Great Western Railway was clearly indicated. A pleasant and profitable holiday may be spent in visiting the places associated with the memories of Lord Cawdor's bloodless victory over Tate's "Black Legion" in February, 1797. At the same time an excursion may be made from Fishguard to St. Davids along the rocky but picturesque coast lying between Strumble Head and Pen Clegyr Point. (*See* Chap. XII.).

A full and interesting account of the French attack on Fishguard is given in the work published by Mr. John Lane, entitled "Napoleon and the Invasion of England—The Story of the Great Terror," 1797-1805. Some illustrations of unique interest are given in these pages. Mr. Edward Laws and other authorities are inclined to doubt the authenticity of the story of the concerted strategic movement ascribed by tradition to a band of Welsh women clad in red cloaks, and mistaken by the half-hearted foe for military reinforcements. It is quite certain, however, that the fair sex was represented amongst the defenders of the soil, for the following inscription may be read in the local churchyard :—

IN
MEMORY OF
JEMIMA NICHOLAS
OF THIS TOWN
"THE WELSH HEROINE"
WHO BOLDLY MARCHED TO MEET
THE FRENCH INVADERS
WHO LANDED ON OUR SHORES IN
FEBRUARY 1797.
SHE DIED IN MAIN STREET, JULY 1832,
AGED 82 YEARS.
AT THE DATE OF THE INVASION SHE
WAS 47 YEARS OLD, AND
LIVED 35 YEARS AFTER THE EVENT.
Erected by subscription
collected at the Centenary Banquet, July 6th, 1897.

The story of the Three Days' War may be told in a very few words. When the morning of Wednesday (February 22, 1797) broke upon the scene, it showed Lord Cawdor crossing

Goodwick Sands at the head of his little troop of Yeomanry, and about three hundred of the Cardigan and Pembrokeshire Militia. Upwards of two thousand pitmen, miners and peasants, with all the resident gentry of nearly three counties welcomed their arrival with a shout that must have been heard in the enemy's camp. They had assembled from every hill and valley, and were armed in the most primitive style: scythe-blades fixed upright at the end of stakes, mattocks, spades, hay-forks, axes, and reaping hooks; very few had guns. A courageous spirit animated them; and the scythe-men, brandishing aloft their terrific weapons, made the air re-echo with impatient cries to be at once led to the attack. "We'll mawe 'em down," they cried, "as we'd mawe a swaythe of grass!" Not the least remarkable of the newcomers was a Nonconformist minister, named Jones, armed with a double-barrelled fowling-piece, at the head of his entire male congregation. The news reached Haverfordwest at seven of the preceding evening, whilst this scion of the church militant preached to a crowded chapel. It was soon whispered in the pulpit. With great presence of mind he exhorted his hearers to remain firm, and not to turn their backs in the day of battle, etc., concluding with an offer to be himself their leader. Then the whole congregation rose, *en masse*, and assented with acclamations. Seizing every ready weapon they forthwith commenced their march. Such, indeed, is the force of example, that lads were seen following their father's footsteps armed like them with forks and reaping hooks. Preparatory to his contemplated attack on the Frenchmen's stronghold, Lord Cawdor rode out at the head of his Yeomanry to within half a mile of their camp. Had the enemy been furnished with artillery, as their lofty rock commanded the road, they need not have left alive one single horseman to carry back the news of his comrades' fate. As it was, after a careful survey, the party coolly trotted off homewards. This visit, curiously enough, led to most important results. The French officers, deceived by the splendid chargers and handsome uniform of these forty yeomen, mistook them for the English General and his staff, and presuming that so large

a suite must belong to a proportionately large body of troops, it was resolved to treat for a surrender. Drunk and mutinous as were their followers, no chance of successful operations could be anticipated, and to add to their despair, the ships had early that morning weighed anchor and left them to their fate.

The painstaking historian will be sorely puzzled by the avowed inter-mixture of fact and fiction in the only existing volume dealing at length with the incidents of February 22-24, 1797, on the authority of which the following "good story" has found almost universal credence, although never even faintly alluded to or hinted at in contemporary records :—

"Several hundred women, young and old, had followed their husbands from the hills, dressed in the national costume, red mantles and men's beaver hats. No sooner had Lord Cawdor started with his troopers than they, with the natural curiosity of their sex, ran up a hill commanding a view of the French camp, and there stood in a dense body watching the result. One of the gentlemen present, struck by their resemblance at a distance to a body of soldiers, rode after them, requesting they would descend the front of the slope in close order, and, disappearing at the bottom, re-ascend in the same manner and show themselves on the summit. This manoeuvre they repeated for a couple of hours, until the jolly Welsh wives were fairly dead-beat, but the stratagem had all the success anticipated. General Tate and his staff, knowing that scarlet was the British uniform, but unable to discriminate whether it was worn by men or women, concluded that large reinforcements had reached Fishguard, of which his late visitors were the officers."

In any case, there can be no doubt about the unconditional surrender of Tate and his scapegrace followers, and their "internment" in Pembroke Prison and elsewhere. Not a fortnight later Lord Cawdor wrote a lengthy dispatch of four folio pages to the Duke of Portland, setting forth in minute detail all that had happened since the invading force was first sighted in the offing. The epilogue had yet to come, and here again romance may have to some extent taken the place of stern

reality. About a hundred of the invaders, aided by a couple of Welsh girls who had formed an attachment to two of their number, "broke prison," cut out Lord Cawdor's twenty-four ton yacht, then lying close by, and made good their escape to France. A handsome reward was offered for its recapture: subsequently portions of it were thrown up on the coast, but the fugitives were safe and sound on French soil. As far as the fair abettors were concerned, the comedy in which they played so important a part ended in marriage. During the continuance of the short-lived peace of Amiens they even revisited Wales and were welcomed with enthusiasm. The depredations committed by the invaders were of a very trivial description. They stole a silver chalice, which was afterwards returned; sent a bullet through a grandfather clock, and took all the victuals they could lay their hands on.

In any case, few relics of these troublous times could be more interesting than Lord Cawdor's dispatch to the Duke of Portland given in facsimile on a following page.

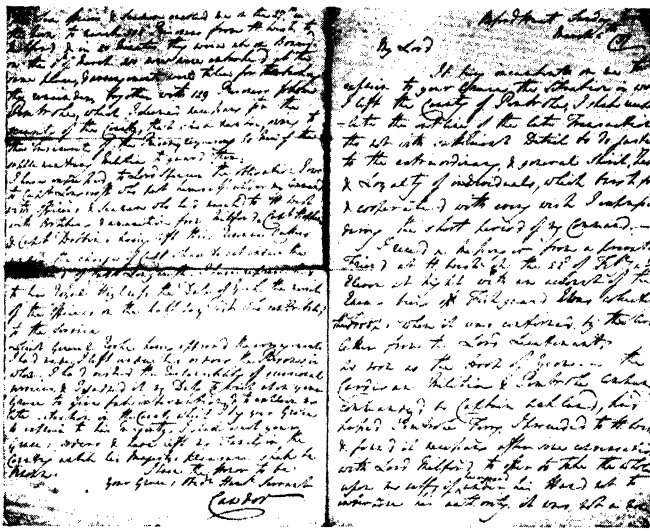
Not only are travellers bound for Ireland amply justified in breaking their journey at Fishguard, where they will find a good deal to repay a visit, but the town and neighbourhood may very well be made the scene of a summer or autumn holiday. Some interesting relics of the "Invasion" are still preserved at "Royal Oak" Inn, where Lord Cawdor penned his ultimatum to the leader of the "Black Legion" and received his submission. It is indeed a strange combination of unforeseen circumstances which make Fishguard as permanently famous in 1924 as she was temporarily celebrated in the stormy days of 1797. The events of the early part of the twentieth century will assuredly keep green the memory of those which occurred at the latter end of the eighteenth, although "piping times of peace" have succeeded the days of the "Great Terror."*

The coast-line is characterized by the presence of numberless coves and baylets, affording convenient opportunities for sea

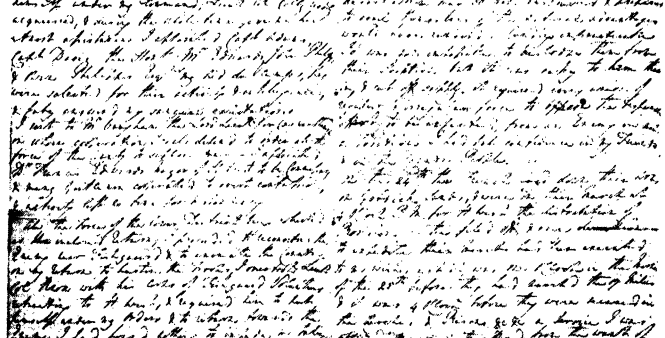
* A full account of the "Three Days' War," as the French invasion of Fishguard has been aptly called, will be found in the work "Napoleon and the Invasion of England. The story of the Great Terror, 1796-1803." Vol. I., pp. 31-74.

HISTORIC RED CLOAKS OF WALES, CONNECTED BY TRADITION WITH THE FRENCH ATTACK ON FISHGUARD IN 1797.

FRENCH INVASION OF FISHGUARD, FEBRUARY, 1797.
From an old print in Cardiff Free Library



FACSIMILE OF CAWDOR DESPATCH (pages 1 and 4).



FACSIMILE OF CAWDOR DESPATCH (pages 2 and 3).

bathing. The scenery is often majestic, and nearly all the cromlechs, as well as every village and church, are associated with some weird and often interesting romance. The folk-lore of this part of Pembrokeshire is as fertile as its vegetation, and travellers will note the quaintness of the old stone cottages and primitive inns of the Pen Caer district.

The beauties of the Kemaes country, every part of which can be reached from Fishguard, are described in a separate chapter.

XIV.—Kemaes Land. Its Castles, Streams, Mountains and Watering-Places.

Newport, Nevern, Kilgerran, St. Dogmaels and the Precelly Mountains.

THERE is a great deal to see in the interesting tract of country lying between Fishguard and the left bank of the Teify which divides Pembrokeshire from Cardiganshire. All the principal points of interest in the ancient Marcher District of Kemaes (so constituted by the Norman invaders of Wales) can be reached from Fishguard, and comfortable quarters can be found in the pleasant old-world "borough" towns of Newport and Nevern, once formidable rivals in the matter of precedence. It is, at least, a curious coincidence that a tour in South Wales may begin and end in a Newport, each of them possessing a ruined mediaeval stronghold, and it is certainly in the fitness of things that the pilgrim to the "Country of Castles," before turning his back on the "Playground of the Principality," should enjoy the wonderful panorama of Pembrokeshire which an ascent of the Precelly Hills will present to his view. There is scarcely a village or church in Kemaes Land without its legendary history; and if Fishguard witnessed the capitulation of an Irish invader, Newport rejoices in having been the home of an Irish Saint, Brynach by name, as far back as the time of St. David. Parrog, where the Nevern stream runs into Newport Bay, is an unpretentious watering

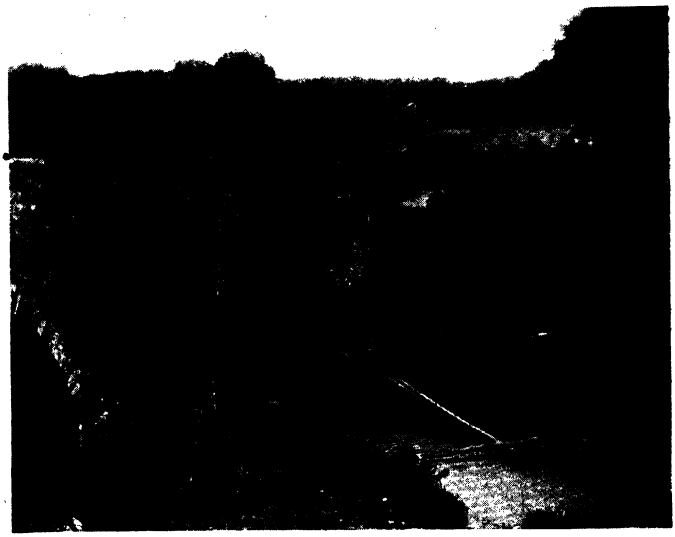
place, growing more and more in favour every summer. It is an ideal place for families during the school-holidays with a mile of safe-bathing reached by a ferry across the Nevern. Anglers will rejoice to note that good trout fishing in parts of this picturesque river may be obtained free of charge on application to the owners of the adjoining property. Newport is within easy reach of Fishguard by the Great Western Railway motor services between there and Cardigan. This service also "taps" Dinas and other excellent resorts.

Shortly after leaving Newport one catches a glimpse of Carn Ingli (Mount Angel), which rises to a height of 1,250 feet, and is only separated by the deep vale of the Clydach from a second rocky eminence, Carnedd Meibion Owen, which strongly reminds one of a Dartmoor Tor. Nevern Church, with its grey walls and broad western tower extending across its full width, will richly repay a visit. At its south-east angle is one of the finest Celtic crosses in all Pembrokeshire. It bears the name of St. Brynach's Stone, which, like the neighbouring "Carns," is the subject of a poetic legend. The "Castell" here is reduced to a series of grassy mounds, but traces are still visible of the ancient "pilgrim's way" and the places where the mediaeval traveller on his way to St. David's invoked at the foot of "Croes Brynach" the benediction of that powerful saint. George Owen, the author of the "Description of Pembrokeshire," lived close by at Henllys, and his account of the district and its folk-lore may still be read with interest. Newport is a fine centre for excursions to Precelly Forest, Eglwys Erw of the "single street," to the "Sergeants' Inn," the huge earthwork known as Castell Mawr, and the great cromlech at Pentre Evan, now under the paternal care of the Association for the Protection of Ancient Monuments, and Cwm yr Eglwys, with its ruined church almost lapped by the waves. For the plant hunter and geologist there is no better country.

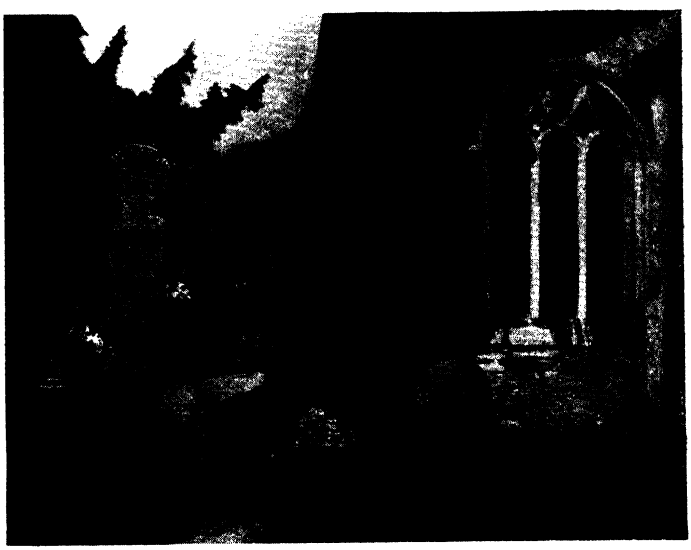
If the holiday-maker happens to be a fisherman, or would enjoy a really quiet holiday in one of the most picturesque parts of Wales, noted for its fine woodlands and cascaded streams,

by all means let him halt at Newport. A recent author revels in the pleasure he experienced at the sight " of the cloud wreaths gathering around the shoulders of Precelly, glowing crimson under the rays of the declining sun, as he sinks into the pallid sea beyond Dinas Head."

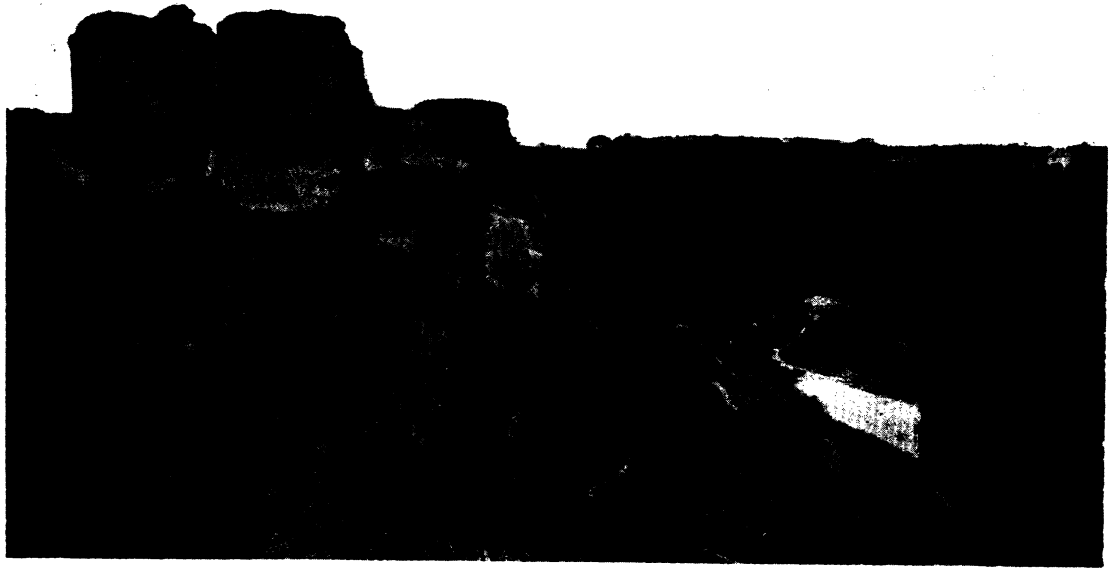
Kilgerran must be visited at all costs, both for the sake of its church and its castle. The former, save the tower, has been rebuilt, but a moss-grown monolith in the graveyard is far older even than the original church. From its present appearance it is dfficult to believe that Kilgerran was once a " borough town," with its portreeve and aldermen, who toasted each newly-elected burgess in strong Welsh ale, the Corporation horn used on these festive occasions holding fully a pint and a half. Kilgerran has had a castle from time immemorial. We read in Powell's " History of Cambria " that Henry I., having granted to Strongbow the lands of Cadwgan ap Blethyn, the great Earl built a stronghold there on foundations begun by Roger Montgomerie. Its subsequent history was not eventful. Kilgerran Castle has " succumbed to the shocks of time and the devastating hand of man, who appears to have regarded its ancient walls in the light of a convenient quarry." The store of stone must have been almost inexhaustible, for two massive round towers as well as a lofty wall of rough stone pierced by sundry doorways and windows, still crown majestically the lofty cliff overhanging the deep gorge of the Teify winding northwards towards Port Cardigan and St. Dogmaels. The Teify has enjoyed the highest reputation as a salmon stream from the days of Giraldus Cambrensis, and the British " corwg," or coracle, is still used on its waters. Some most enjoyable touring may be done in Teifyside. Close to Cardigan, but on the Pembrokeshire side of the river, is St. Dogmaels, where the heliotrope, fuchsias and hydrangea of the cottage garden brave the winter air with impunity. It was once the site of a great Welsh monastery, of which nothing remains but a few crumbling arches soon doomed to disappear. Should time permit, no one should omit a ramble over the Precelly Mountains and the ascent (a matter of no great difficulty) of Moel Cwm Cerwyn, their loftiest peak.



NEVERN BRIDGE AND CHURCH.



OLD CROSS, NEVERN CHURCH.



KILGERRAN CASTLE.

Precelly is the standing weather-glass of all the country-side.

" When Percellye weareth a hatte
All Pembrokeshire weete of that."

ran the old rhyme. The view from " Precelly top " is thus admirably described by the author of " Nooks and Corners of Pembrokeshire " : " Near hand, one's gaze wanders across a vast expanse of rather monotonous treeless landscape, until the attention is arrested by the lake-like reaches of Milford Haven, spreading like crooked fingers into the heart of the land. South and west the sea encompasses all, with Gower lying far away upon the Bristol Channel, and perhaps a faint outline of the cliffs of Devon verging the remote horizon. The isolated hills overlooking St. David's are easily identified, flanked by a broad stretch of St. Bride's Bay and its group of guardian islets. Strumble Head thrusts its tempest-torn crags seawards into Cardigan Bay, whose coastline trends away league upon league with infinite gradation to where, softened by the humid, brine-laden atmosphere,

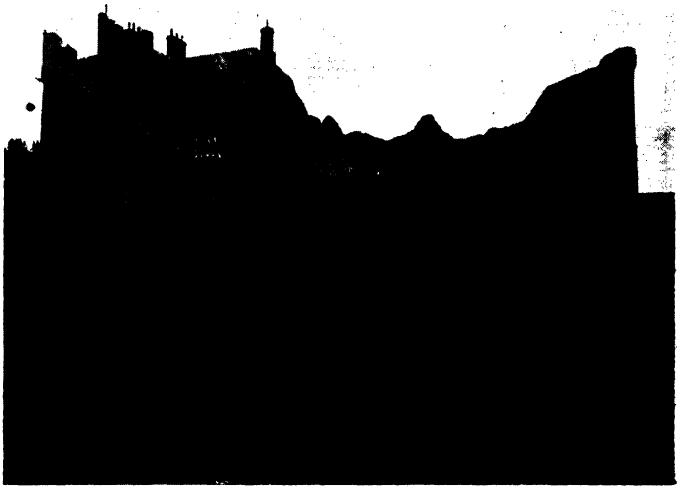
' The grey cloud-cradled mountains spread afar.'

Newport Bay, lying under the lee of Dinas Head, looks as though one might cast a stone into its calm waters ; and upon turning our gaze inland, the eye loses itself amidst the many-folding hills, as they rise in soft undulation to the dusky highlands of Glamorganshire."

XV.—The Garden of Wales. Cardigan Bay and its Hinterland.

From Carmarthen to Aberystwyth, Llanpumpsaint, Lampeter and Strata Florida.

IT is through the ancient and interesting capital of Carmarthenshire and by the line running thence northwards through the "Sweet shire of Cardigan" to the sea coast, that the holiday-makers of Swansea, Cardiff, Newport, the Southern Marches, Bristol, Bath, and the West of England generally must reach the "Garden of Wales." The fact is sufficiently self-evident, but it was apparently not fully recognized when the author of "Highways and Byways in South Wales" and his artist friend visited the district, and spoke slightingly of the "M. and M." as "possessing all the characteristics of a rural monopoly and a be-thankful-you've-got-a-railway-at-all sort of air," which augured ill for "either speed or punctuality." The changes and improvements achieved since 1905 have effectually taken the sting out of his reproaches, but the modern traveller will assuredly not regret the leisurely pace at which they moved from village to village, valley to valley, and trout stream to trout stream, making notes and sketches eminently calculated to induce appreciative readers with plenty of time at their disposal to break their journey at one or two points of supreme interest, notwithstanding the facilities offered by express trains and "through services," to say nothing of the excellent road-motor



NEWPORT CASTLE.

ST. DOGMAELS.

LAMPETER COLLEGE.

RIVER TEIFY, LAMPETER.

cars which now "link up" the bracing watering-places of Cardigan Bay with Llandyssul.

The train has seemingly only just quitted Carmarthen when you find yourself amongst the oak-clad gorges of the Gwili, and begin to realize the fact that the approaches to the "Garden of Wales" are scarcely a whit less beautiful than the Garden itself. Now you look down on winding brooks as clear as crystal, on thatched cottages of indescribable quaintness, on gardens bright with flowers, on verdant hedgerows, or on broad expanses of common land thickly studded with patches of golden gorse; now the eye rests on tree-covered slopes, shady glens and, looking upwards on mountain tops standing out boldly against a sky almost Italian in the deepness of its colouring. Those who, like Mr. Bradley, have an opportunity of climbing their sides, are rewarded with the prospect of "a landscape full of varied features, soft and bold, rich and barren, and teeming with the rural life of Celtic Wales, flickering in the cloud and sunshine of a breezy summer day."

It is amongst such scenery as this that the holiday-maker understands the enthusiasm which inspired the verse of Thomas Churchward and the prose of George Borrow, both of whom, in a different fashion, sung the praises of Wild Wales as they had never been sung before.

The train brings you rapidly to Llanpumpsaint, where you catch a glimpse of the romantic valley of the Llan, of richly wooded parks and of hills in which gold-bearing quartz was discovered in Roman times. The name Llanpumpsaint means "the village of five saints," but it must not be confused with Pumpsaint, quite twenty miles to the east on the banks of the "classic Gothi," famous as the birthplace of "Immortal Lewis," who is declared by George Borrow to be "the greatest poet, after ap Gwilym, in all Welsh literature." The primitive hostelry and the home-brewed beer upon which Borrow lavishes such unstinted praise, were discovered at Pumpsaint, and not at Llanpumpsaint.

Lampeter is only nine miles to the west of the haunts of Lewis Glyn Cothi, and as one descends into the valley of the Teify

(declared on competent authority to be the finest trouting stream in all Wales, to say nothing of its salmon and sewin) a view may occasionally be enjoyed of the Cardiganshire lowland, spreading away seaward in the direction of New Quay, Aberayron and Aberystwyth.

Lampeter is certainly well worth a visit, and if a halt has been made at the " Hamlet of the Five Saints " to see the Roman excavations, enjoy the rural beauties of Glen Cothi and see the ancient church and interesting village of Cayo (may not the name be derived from Caius, one of the Roman goldseekers?) of which Bard Lewis wrote " Cayo, which I love like a beaver, its festivities and music, a paradise containing everything necessary to man." The ride on to Lampeter, through pasture lands, where black cattle and sheep browse amidst the gorse, broom and fern, is, if practicable, a pleasant experience.

Lampeter was a place of note long before it became the Alma Mater of the Welsh " Church Establishment," and there arose on the banks of the Teify certain collegiate buildings of reposeful aspect, sufficiently important to remind one forcibly both of the Cam and the Isis. The modern stronghold of Welsh clericalism is every whit as picturesquely situated as the citadel of the Calvinistic Methodists at Bala or the undenominational University of Aberystwyth. St. David's College has the power of conferring degrees, and possesses a hall, quadrangle and chapel, with the other architectural appurtenances of the educational system practised at Oxford and Cambridge. St. David's is justly proud of such men as Bishops Thirlwell and Ollivant and so redoubtable a theologian as Dr. Rowland Williams, but it must not be forgotten that the name of Lampeter was a familiar one as far back as the twelfth century, when Giraldus speaks of an archbishop successfully preaching the Crusade at Llanbedr pont Stephen. Low hills surround Lampeter on three sides, while the fourth commands a wide-spreading view of the rich pasture lands through which " amber, bog-fed, fish-abounding Teify winds westwards towards the sea." Lampeter is certainly one of the beauty spots of the Cardigan hinterland, and is always looked upon with affection

and veneration by those who receive their classical and religious training within the walls of Bishop Burgess's useful and carefully maintained foundation. The undergraduates at St. David's now number over 120, and so great is its " clerical fecundity " that a well-known writer has playfully rechristened " Sweet Cardigan " the " shire of parsons and pigs." There seems, however, to be nothing in its domestic economy to justify the latter appellation except its alliterative advantages. It would have been more correct to style it a land of " parsons and preachers," for while one son of a " Cardy " farmer graduates at St. David's, his brother in many cases will be heard of at Bala or Aberystwyth. There is a certain tolerance and catholicity of opinion amongst the honest Cardigan folk not to be found elsewhere in Wales. From Lampeter four or five most agreeable excursions may conveniently be made. You can travel by railway to Aberayron and thence by road-motor on to Aberystwyth, keeping close to the coastline and passing through Llanrhystyd, or by arranging for a special car you may follow the course of the Teify to its junction with the sea beyond Cardigan. Both Cardigan and the Aberayron valley will be spoken of at length in other chapters.

Meanwhile, the reader must be supposed to journey by train to Strata Florida, just sixteen miles to the north-east, the " amber " river and the line of railway alike skirting the base of the Cardiganshire uplands, and passing through a fruitful tract of country where, in early autumn, golden patches of ripening corn here and there diversify the broad stretches of rich meadowland bordering the stream described by Giraldus as " the noble Teify abounding with the finest salmon in Wales." This was in 1188, only twenty-four years after the building of the great Cistercian Monastery at Mynachlogfawr (Strata Florida) by Rhys ap Griffith—" the Lord Rhys, the head and shield and strength of the south and all Wales," whose grandfather Rhys ap-Tudor, in pre-Cistercian times, had already founded another religious house on a site two miles away and still known as Yr Hen Monach or Mynachlog, " the ancient monastery."

The surroundings of Strata Florida do not belie its name,

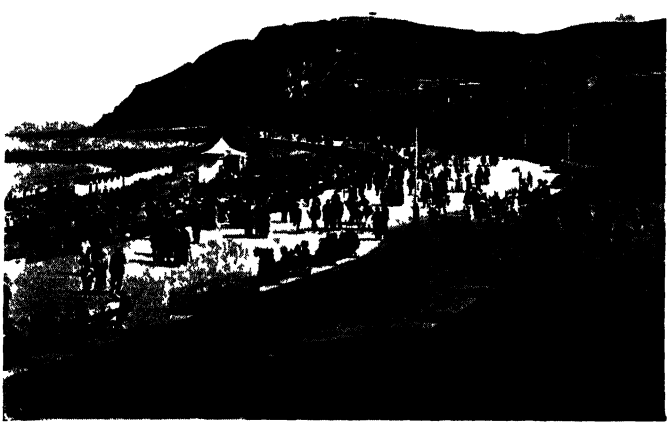
although very little remains of the magnificence of the once opulent monks of Ystradfflur. The ruins themselves are scanty indeed. From the outside nothing can be seen but the still stately Norman doorway and a window adjoining it, but when the customary fee has been paid at the neighbouring farmhouse, a ground plan is lent the visitor, who, if he possesses the necessary amount of patience or leisure, can, without much difficulty, trace out the nave, choir, transepts, refectory and other integral portions of the once superb edifice, which in ancient times provided Wales with a national Valhalla—a burying-place made beautiful both by art and nature. The situation of the place is in the highest degree inspiring, for the position of Strata Florida is in no degree less charming than that of Melrose or Tintern, but it requires no small effort of the imagination to connect the row of slabs, adorned with ropework carving of an unmistakable Celtic pattern, with the gorgeous sepulchres which the great Llewelyn must have seen in 1238 when he summoned his tributary princes to swear allegiance to his son David by " Ystrad Flur's blest monastery." Exactly half a century later the abbey was burned by Edward I., but it was soon rebuilt, and Henry IV. made it his headquarters while endeavouring to capture his Welsh foes amongst the mountains of Plinlimmon, when Owen Glendower first took up arms against the English. In 1408 Prince Henry took up his abode there, while making ready for the siege of Aberystwyth Castle.

Modern tombstones may be seen in phenomenal abundance at Strata Florida. They surround on every side the small, and by no means imposing, parish church standing in the spacious graveyard of the vanished Abbey, where two or three weather-beaten, gnarled and hollow yew trees (the solitary survivors of forty) help to keep green the memory of the Welsh Petrarch, Dafydd ap Gwilym, who, according to tradition, was buried beneath one of them. It was here that George Borrow, bare-headed and kneeling, repeated, with a voice shaken by emotion, the lines :—

" Better for thee thy boughs to wave,
Though scathed, above ap Gwilym's grave,
Than stand in pristine glory drest
Where some ignoble bard doth rest."

GATEWAY, STRATA FLORIDA ABBEY.

ABERYSTWYTH
From an old print



ABERYSTWYTH ESPLANADE.

We shall hear of ap Gwilym again at Aberystwyth and Newcastle Emlyn, as well as in the Ayron Valley, where he finally espoused the beautiful Morfydd, after having been elected "chief bard of Glamorgan." It was during Edward III.'s reign that he composed the touching "Ode to the North Wind," translated into English a century ago by Mr. Johnes of Havod. For George Borrow the last resting-place of ap Gwilym possessed greater attractions than the graves of kings or nobles, warriors or statesmen, knights and esquires. Borrow's strongest sympathies were, as a rule, unquestionably centred in the "British Tyrol,"* but for him Strata Florida was beyond all others a place of pilgrimage. If perchance any twentieth-century traveller shares his intense enthusiasm for the poet who has slept for five entire centuries in this most romantic of God's acres, he may be glad to learn that just over the Carmarthenshire frontier lies Talley Abbey, where ap Gwilym spent much of his time, and probably did a good deal of the love-making reflected in his verses. The venerable ruins and lakes of Talley are situated midway between Lampeter and Llandilo. His swan-song has a strange and peculiar fascination when read or recited amongst the nameless graves and lichen-grown tombstones of Ystradfflur :—

"Utterly have passed away
Youthful prowess, spirit gay,
Wrung for ever from my tongue,
Is the glorious power of song,
Ivor, my illustrious guide,
Nest, my patroness his bride,
Morfydd, idol of my breast,
All are in the dust at rest!
By a life I loathe oppressed,
I am left alone to bear
Time's dread load of grief and care."

* * * * * *

Regaining the railway at Strata Florida station, you pass through another verdant and well-watered valley which, in an incredibly short space of time, brings you to Aberystwyth.

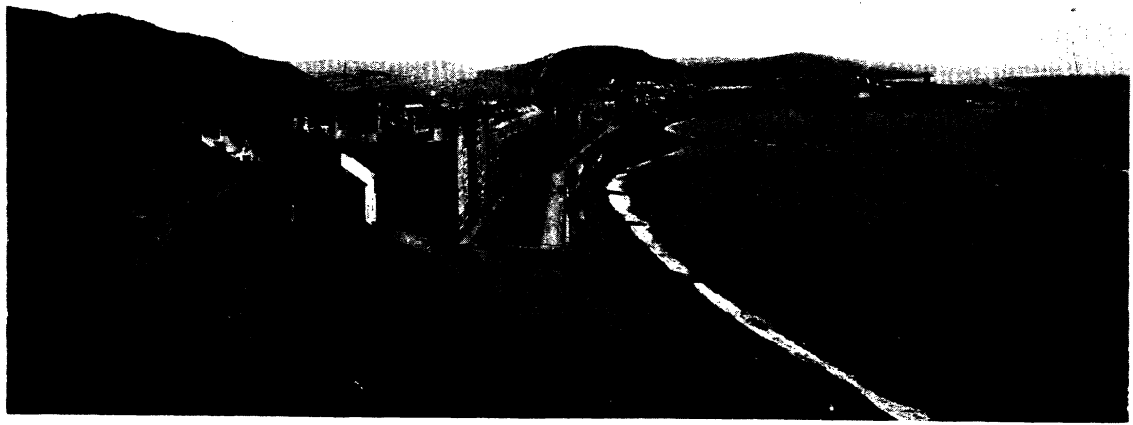
* "North Wales: The British Tyrol," published by the Great Western Railway Co., Paddington Station, London, W. (Price 6d.).

XVI.—Aberystwyth: A Home of Welsh Culture.

WHETHER Aberystwyth belongs to North or South Wales has been for at least a hundred years a constant subject of discussion and contention with topographical writers both great and small. In reality it forms a sort of halfway house between the " Country of Castles " (for which an eventful past distinctly qualifies it) and " the British Tyrol " (with which it has a certain geographical affinity).

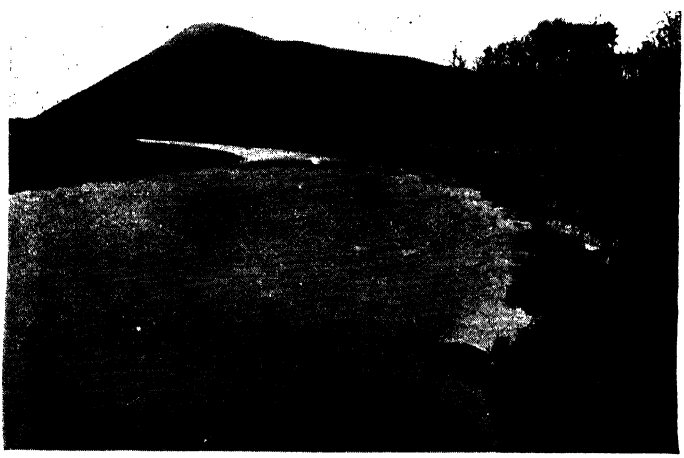
As a matter of fact Aberystwyth is in Mid-Wales, but for the purposes of this book it will probably be deemed sufficient if the pleasant and healthy watering-place described as " fashionable " in 1807, " delectable " in 1837, " progressive " in 1857, " and now undeniably up-to-date " is spoken of as the best known watering-place in the " Garden of Wales." Connected as it now is by frequent direct trains with densely-populated commercial centres such as Swansea, Cardiff, Newport, the Black Country, and Bristol, and united to its more immediate neighbours and many of its outlying attractions by excellent road-car services, Aberystwyth is sure to justify by its steadily increasing prosperity and popularity the wisdom of those who, with commendable foresight, spent enormous sums in giving her an ample supply of the purest water from the springs of mighty Plinlimmon, and laying out fresh drives and walks for the special benefit of visitors. Protected from the force of nearly every wind, and gifted with a particularly dry and equable climate, Aberystwyth has its votaries at all seasons of the year.

Towards the close of the eighteenth century, when the Duke of Gloucester was developing Weymouth, and the Prince of Wales had already begun to patronize Brighton, a chalybeate spring came to light at Aberystwyth which was said to possess



ABERYSTWYTH.

CLARACH COVE, ABERYSTWYTH.



PEN DINAS, NEAR ABERYSTWYTH.

the essential characteristics of the far-famed waters of Tunbridge Wells. Under the aegis of certain local magnates Aberystwyth soon possessed Assembly Rooms, a Marine Parade, a Theatre and an improved harbour, from which first sailing vessels and then steam packets carried on an active trade with both Bristol and Liverpool. Many and great changes have taken place at Aberystwyth since the traveller spoken of in the introduction visited the " Garden of Wales " at a time when the names of Napoleon, Nelson and Trafalgar were uppermost in the thoughts of both Englishmen and Welshmen. He approached the town from Aberayron (spelled thus and not Aberaeron) and Llanrhystyd. Such useful aids to travel and holiday-making as motor-coaches were not even dreamed of, but the glorious prospect which met his gaze was the same. He was able to discern at once " the giant head of Cader Idris and that of nearer Plinlimmon, the pride of Cardiganshire, towering in all their majesty."

" About the fifth milestone from Aberystwyth," he writes, " the landscape is almost boundless, and may be truly called sublime." The Istwyth and the Rhaidol, Rheidol or Rhydol are duly crossed, and the tired pedestrian enters the town, depressed only by the sombre tints of the houses. He cries in vain for whitewash, but " La, sir, would it not be a shame to conceal such beautiful stone? " was the rejoinder of an English-speaking native. Before he goes much further he is convinced from all he sees that " Aberystwyth promises fair to be the first bathing station in South Wales." This visitor at any rate was not troubled with geographical doubts and difficulties, and in a contented frame of mind he puts up " at the ' Talbot,' kept by Mr. Jones, an attentive and well-behaved man, who during the bathing season keeps an excellent ordinary." His good opinion of the place was confirmed by the perusal of a newspaper, from which he learned that: " The crowds of company that have flocked to this romantic shore, during the season, have been great beyond precedent. Many new houses have been built for their accommodation; and a subscription has been entered

into to erect rooms on the walks near the sea, which are to be ready for the reception of company next summer. Cards and assemblies three times a week. Plays every other night, and it is intended to construct a new and elegant theatre, on a very large scale." "Advance Aberystwyth," was the cry in 1807, and it finds a vigorous echo at the present time. If the news of the gay doings on the sunny shores of Cardigan Bay ever reached the Heir Apparent, he must have trembled for the supremacy of his beloved Brighton. The early patrons of Aberystwyth had worked with a will, and to some purpose.

They climbed Pen Dinas in 1807; the ascent is appreciably easier now, but the view which rewards your exertion, be it great or small, is the same, and this eminence, as well as Craig-Las, still counts amongst the natural glories of Aberystwyth. In 1835 Mr. Hemingway writes in terms of quite justifiable enthusiasm: "From the summit of Pen Dinas you at once behold three beautiful valleys, with the rivers Istwyth (sometimes spelt Ystwyth) and Rhaidol winding their devious course on either side beneath his feet. On turning round you are gratified with a magnificent view of the expansive (!) bay of Cardigan, with its bold coast stretching out on either hand to the extremity of Cardiganshire, on the southern side, and that of Carnarvon on the northern; the latter embracing within its range the rocky ridge of Cader Idris and the snow-capped peak of Snowdon." By the time these words were penned, the fortunes of Aberystwyth were resting on a sure foundation, and coaches were running daily to Shrewsbury, Worcester and Hereford, and three times a week to South Wales. Unconscious of the coming revolution in locomotion by the advent of steam, but possibly with a prophetic view to the motor of the then distant future, £4,000 had just been spent on a new line of road to the Marches. Aberystwyth was soon to welcome Mr. Roscoe within her borders, while David Cox sketched the Marine Parade crowded with fashionable holiday-makers. Turner had already immortalized on canvas the wonderful Aberystwyth sunsets. On the top of Pen Dinas one forcibly realizes what old Thomas Churchward had in his mind when he wrote, in his

" Worthiness of Wales," the lines :—

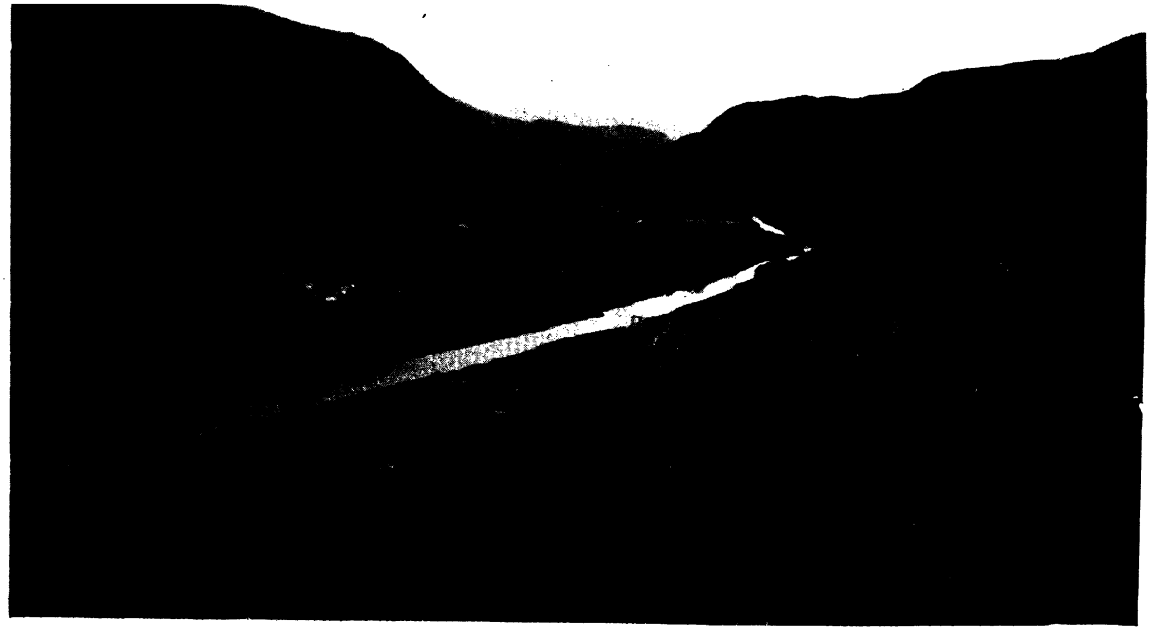
> " Dame Nature drew these mountains in such sort
> As though the one should yield the other grace ;
> Or as each hill itself were such a fort,
> They scorned to stoope to give the cannon place,
> If all were plaine and smooth like garden ground
> Where should hye woods and goodly groves be found ? "

Like many other Welsh towns, Aberystwyth owes its origin to the building of a castle. It was in 1107 that Gilbert de Strongbow completed his fortress. Gilbert's stronghold was rebuilt in 1277 by Edward I. of England, but in 1377 Owen Glendower was besieged in it by Henry IV., who took it. It was, however, recaptured and garrisoned by the Welsh. During the Civil Wars it changed hands more than once, and in the result became the interesting and picturesque heap of ruins it still remains. Some of its features are of considerable antiquarian interest, and many of the coins struck therein before the final surrender to Cromwell bore an ostrich feather. The story of Aberystwyth Castle manifestly affords excellent opportunities for spectacular display, and if the eight hundredth anniversary of its foundation had been celebrated in the now prevalent fashion, one might have hoped to see a " presentment " of Sir Hugh Myddleton carrying on remunerative silver mining operations near Aberystwyth in Queen Elizabeth's reign, and so obtaining funds to bring the New River to London, or the still more successful Mr. Bushell, Lord Bacon's servant, who realized such a fortune that he was able to give Charles I. something like £100,000 in addition to clothing all the royal army.

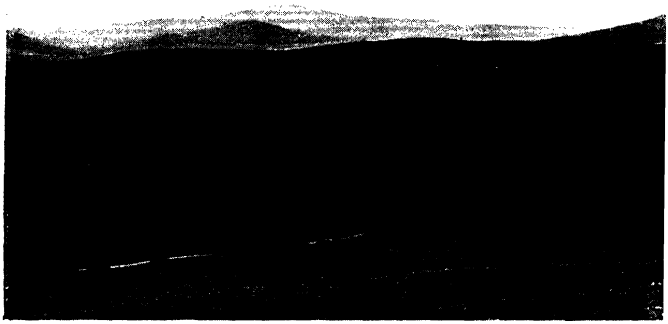
Very few of our home watering-places possess greater climatic advantages or better accommodation for visitors of all classes than Aberystwyth, which has derived special benefit from the various new departures inaugurated by the Great Western Railway. The music provided during the season is exceptionally good ; the river and deep-sea fishing obtainable is far above the average, and the golf course is beautifully situated on high ground overlooking the sea. The Borth links are within easy reach. The health statistics furnished by the local

authorities are certainly such as to encourage the promoters of any intelligent effort to bring about the permanent establishment of a winter season. The sea-bathing is all that could be desired, and those who enjoy it under the present regime cannot fail to appreciate the grim but unconscious humour of the description of it as it was a little more than a century ago, given by the tourist of Trafalgar times, when Aberystwyth, Cardigan and two other boroughs *shared* a Member of Parliament between them. "I walked to the bathing machines," he writes; "they are constructed of wood, topped in a pavilion shape and running on four wheels. Three or four are allotted in one quarter to the ladies, and as many in another to the gentlemen." By the time the explorer arrived at the "gentlemen's quarter" he began to doubt the efficacy of salt water immersion, and finally abandoned the idea. At the commencement of the 19th century the notion of mixed bathing would evidently have astonished the Aberystwythian even more than the apparition of the motor-coach which now takes him so expeditiously to Aberayron.

An excellent official guide-book has been published under the auspices of the Corporation which affords an abundance of useful information as to the numerous institutions and organizations which contribute so materially to make life at Aberystwyth enjoyable. Amongst these are the fine Promenade Pier inaugurated by his late Majesty King Edward VII.; the University College with its various ramifications; and the National Library of Wales, which has its abode in a magnificent pile of buildings erected on a hill overlooking the town and bay. Mental as well as physical culture is well cared for at Aberystwyth. Since 1896 a cliff railway takes you up Constitution Hill, from which the view is quite as striking as that already described from the top of Pen Dinas, where the traces of British earthworks and an unfinished statue of the Duke of Wellington may be said to cover twenty centuries of our military history. There is nothing more striking on the whole of the Welsh littoral than the superb crescent of coast from Bardsey Island to Strumble Head, Blackberry Lane, Panorama Walk, Elysian Grove, Plas Crug



RHEIDOL VALLEY.



PLINLIMMON FROM DEVIL'S BRIDGE ROAD.

IN THE SHADOW OF PLINLIMMON.

(once the residence of Prince Llewelyn), Llanbadarnfawr (with its twelfth-century church), Brynymor, Bow Street (ominous name!), Gogerddan, Nanteos (the "Nightingale's Brook"), and Clarach Valley are all within easy reach of the centre of the town. Keble lived at Cwm Mansion in the "Vale of Clear Waters" (Clarach) when writing the latter portion of the "Christian Year," and it was after visiting the source of the Severn on Plinlimmon that he composed the hymn "Go up and see the new-born rill." A lectern given by him is still used at Llangorwen Church, where services in Welsh and English are held on Sunday mornings. Aberystwyth as a travel-centre from which the greater part of the "Garden of Wales," and both the coast and hinterland of Cardigan Bay may be conveniently explored, will be dealt with at some length in the next chapter.

XVII.—Excursions from Aberystwyth by motor-car and otherwise. The Devil's Bridge. Hafod. Plinlimmon, etc.

AT the time of the first issue of the "Country of Castles" the motor-car entered little or nothing into the calculations of the holiday-maker; and its influence in South Wales was scarcely felt. Nowadays the familiar hoot may constantly be heard along the Rheidol Valley, at the Devil's Bridge, amongst the shady solitudes of Hafod, or even on the lower slopes of Plinlimmon, and it is impossible to ignore the fact that the use of the motor adds most materially to the possibilities of Aberystwyth as a travel-centre. Too great caution cannot possibly be exercised in the choice both of a chauffeur and a machine. If the former is a novice at local topography, he can only be a source of vexation and perplexity. If the motor lacks the power necessary to breast the long and steep hills in which the Cardigan road abounds, it is worse than useless. Good motors and capable drivers can doubtless be found in the district, and the powerful cars used for the services of the Great Western Railway are specially adapted to the requirements of the neighbourhood. Travellers would be well advised if they conferred with the Company's representative when planning excursions of this kind.

To visit Aberystwyth without seeing the Devil's Bridge is rank heresy (especially now that this visit can be made with ease by the Vale of Rheidol section of the Great Western Railway). Mr. Bradley, however, seems to have neglected both,

DEVIL'S BRIDGE.

FALL OF THE RHEIDOL.
From an old print.

From an old print.

while "Parson" Warner of Bath, who "discovered" the latter in 1797, and wrote a most amusing account of his experiences, never pushed on to the then rising watering-place, but took the mountain road to Machynlleth. After the lapse of more than a century his two letters dated from Devil's Bridge are excellent reading,* and have been extensively quoted by every subsequent writer. The centenary of Warner's arrival in the Hafod country coincided accidentally with the completion and opening of the light railway which now carries travellers up the gorse-grown, tree-clad mountain slopes to within a short distance of the waterfalls. The journey is accomplished in about an hour, and early risers may get to the "Hafod Arms" in time for breakfast. There is certainly no resemblance between the present establishment and the primitive predecessor of which Warner gives so amusing an account in justification of the epigram:

"'*This* is the Devil's Bridge,' exclaimed the guide:
'*That* is the Devil's House,' the trav'ller cried."

If the name of the former awakens memories of the St. Gothard, a sunrise seen from Pont-y-Mynach is calculated to remind one forcibly of early experiences on the summit of the Rigi.

Nowhere is the strange variety of scenery which characterizes the "Garden of Wales" so noticeable as in the valley of the Rheidol,† where patches of broom and gorse flourish by the side of fruitful cornfields and smiling meadows tenanted by the sleekest of cattle. It is a land of rich pastures, babbling brooks, and tangled hedgerows, the latter ablaze with foxglove, wild roses, cherry blossom and laburnum. The bright yellow of the gorse and broom contrasts strikingly with the intense green of the grass and the darker shades of the forest trees, through which the miniature trains of the Vale of Rheidol section of the Great Western Railway, thread their way up the mountain side,

* "A walk through Wales in August, 1797." By the Rev. Richard Warner. Bath: 1798, pp. 61-83.

† The writer has met with no less than seven or eight variations in spelling the name, the latest being Rheiddol. With early writers it is Rheidiol or Rhaidol. The same observation applies to Plinlimmon and Plynlimon. The "Devil's Bridge" itself is sometimes "Pont-y-Mynach," and at others "Pont-y-Monach."

almost touching the branches as they go. From below it looks as if a ribbon had been stretched right across the woods. The shrubs and bracken assume occasionally fantastic shapes, and from the carriage windows you seem to see the gigantic figure of a stag on the slopes beyond the sparkling river.

The history, real and legendary, of both bridge and waterfalls, has been told many times since William Wordsworth, nine years after Waterloo, made a pilgrimage to the junction of the Rheidol and the Mynach, and thus apostrophized the " Torrent of the Devil's Bridge " :—

> " How art thou named? In search of what strange land,
> From what huge height, descending? Can such force
> Of waters issue from a British source,
> Or hath not Pindus fed thee, where the band
> Of Patriots scoop their freedom out, with hand
> Desperate as thine? Or come the incessant shocks
> From that young Stream, that smites the throbbing rocks
> Of Viamala? There I seem to stand,
> As in life's morn; permitted to behold,
> From the dread chasm, woods climbing above woods,
> In pomp that fades not; everlasting snows;
> And skies that ne'er relinquish their repose;
> Such power possess the family of floods,
> Over the minds of Poets, young or old."

The close apposition of the Evil One and the pious ecclesiastics of Strata Florida in this particular connexion has puzzled several generations of travellers. It has only been recently suggested that the tradition of our forefathers really originated in the confusion of the terms " Mynach " and " Monach." The difficulties of Welsh orthography have certainly much to answer for.

George Borrow very wisely included Pont-y-Mynach in his itinerary, and thus chronicles his impressions :—" From the bottom of the first flight of steps leading down into the hollow you see a modern-looking bridge, bestriding a deep chasm or cleft to the south-east, near the top of the dingle of the Monks' River, over it lies the road to Pont Erwyd. That, however, is not the Devil's Bridge—but about twenty feet below that bridge and completely overhung by it don't you see a shadowy, spectral object, something like a bow, which likewise bestrides the chasm?

You do! Well! that shadowy, spectral object is the celebrated Devil's Bridge, or, as the timorous peasants of the locality call it, the Pont-y-Gwr Drwg. To view it properly, and the wonders connected with it, you must pass over the bridge above it, and descend a precipitous dingle on the eastern side till you come to a small platform in a crag. Below you now is a frightful cavity, at the bottom of which the waters of the Monks' River, which comes tumbling from a glen to the east, whirl, boil and hiss in a horrid pot or cauldron, called in the language of the country *Twll yn y graig*, or the hole in the rock, in a manner truly tremendous. On your right is a slit, probably caused by volcanic force, through which the waters, after whirling in the cauldron, eventually escape. The slit is wonderfully narrow considering its altitude, which is very great, considerably upwards of a hundred feet—nearly above you, crossing the slit, which is partially wrapt in darkness, is the far-famed bridge, the Bridge of the Evil Man, a work which, though crumbling and darkly grey, does much honour to the hand which built it, whether it was the hand of Satan or of a monkish architect, for the arch is chaste and beautiful, far superior in every respect, except in safety and utility, to the one above it, which from this place you have not the mortification of seeing. Gaze on these objects, namely the horrid, seething pot or cauldron, the gloomy volcanic slit, and the spectral, shadowy Devil's Bridge for about three minutes, allowing a minute to each, then scramble up the bank and repair to your inn, and have no more sight-seeing that day, for you have seen enough. And if pleasant recollections do not haunt you through life of the noble falls and the beautiful wooded dingles to the west of the bridge of the Evil One, and awful and mysterious ones of the monks' boiling cauldron, the long, savage, shadowy cleft, and the grey crumbling, spectral bridge, I say boldly, that you must be a very unpoetical person indeed."

The eloquence of Borrow must be taken as a sufficient excuse for omitting the fable of old Megan Llandunach and her lost cow, by which the average Cardigan peasant has from time immemorial accounted for the existence of Pont-y-Mynach, and

the consequent affluence of travellers and holiday-makers. Hafod and Pontrhydygroes may either be visited from the "Devil's Bridge," or made the objective of a separate excursion. The G.W.R. station at Trawscoed is only five miles from Hafod, and conveyances run constantly from Aberystwyth. The surrounding scenery is worthy of the Engadine, to which it bears a strong resemblance. It was at Hafod that George Frederick Handel composed the magnificent "Hallelujah Chorus," during the interpretation of which George III. made standing up *de rigueur*. There is every reason to believe that the theme originated in the composer hearing the worshippers shout "Gogoniant" (glory) during a Welsh revival service he attended at Llangeitho, of which something more will be said in another place.

The ascent of Plinlimmon (now generally written Plynlymon) may be most conveniently made from Aberystwyth. Not only is the far-reaching view obtainable on a clear day from its summit one of almost unrivalled beauty, but the mountain, though less lofty than Snowdon and scarcely as awe-inspiring as Cader Idris, possesses a peculiar interest for most travellers as the source of the Severn and the Wye, as well as the Rheidol, the Dulas and the Llynnant. It was, moreover, the scene of Owen Glendower's last stand in his gallant struggle for Welsh independence. It was on Mynydd Hyddgen he inflicted a signal defeat on his adversaries despite the great superiority of their forces. It is to this engagement Shakepeare alludes when he makes him say of Henry Bolingbroke :—

> "Thrice from the banks of Wye
> And sandy-bottomed Severn have I sent him
> Bootless home and weather-beaten back."

Mr. Roscoe speaks with even more delight and enthusiasm of his visit to Plinlimmon than of his sojourn at the "Hafod Arms," quoting the appropriate lines :—

> "High o'er his mates, how huge Plinlimmon lifts
> His many-beaconed head !—O'er coronalled
> With still and shadow mist—or rolling storms
> That speak loud-voiced to the echoing hills,
> And rouse repeated thunder."

For Mr. Roscoe the Wye is " Plinlimmon's fairest child." The brightness of the gorse in the " Garden of Wales " was as remarkable seventy years ago as it is to-day, and while journeying through Llanbadarn, Capel Bangor, Goginan and Pontarwyd towards the lower slopes of the " Mountain of the Five Beacons," one continually remarks the lavish loveliness of that—

" Bonny wild flower
Whose blossoms so yellow, and branches so long,
O'er moor and o'er rough rocky mountain are flung,
Far away from the trim garden and bower."

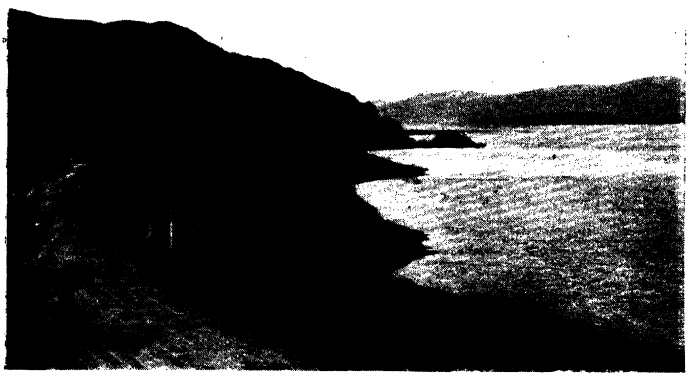
The writer of a most useful local handbook [" Gibson's Guide," Revised Edition] gives a timely caution which travellers bound for Plynlymon would do well to bear in mind. Steddfa Gwriffg, the cluster of houses where a tributary of the Wye divides North from South Wales, is the point at which the ascent on foot should be commenced, and not at Dyffryn Castell, favoured by over-astute carriage-drivers anxious to avoid the extra drive to Steddfa Gwriffg. From the last-mentioned hamlet the ascent is easy, the distance being under three miles. In our own times the mountain, from the peaks of which nearly every Welsh county, together with portions of Shropshire and Hereford, are visible, affords an abundant water supply to both Aberystwyth and Birmingham. Completing the ascent of Plynlymon the tourist can make his way to Rhayader for the Upper Wye Valley. Here the Great Western Railway runs side by side with the Wye through some of the most beautiful of Welsh scenery.

Llyfnant Valley, Bedd Taliesen, Borth (beloved alike of golfers and bathers), the Rheidol Falls, Aberdovey and many other romantic and interesting spots are within easy reach of Aberystwyth. Strata Florida has been already described, and Aberayron and its famous valley, as well as the watering-places lying between Llanrhystyd and Gwbert will be spoken of elsewhere. If a visit to Lampeter has whetted the appetite of the traveller for the various sites and scenes connected with Welsh theology, Llangeitho should certainly be visited. The Great Western Railway takes you to Tregaron, and the drive thence to Llangeitho is a most enjoyable one. In a chapter contributed to Miss

Evelyn Lewes's " Picturesque Aberayron," Mr. John M. Howell, a local antiquarian, tells in a few pages the story of the religious movement which was in progress at Llangeitho when Handel came over from Hafod to attend a revival meeting. . The life and soul of the spiritual re-awakening was Daniel Rowlands, whose vehemence, fervour and eloquence drew crowds of listeners from all parts of the Principality. A large chapel was erected for his use in 1764, and twenty years later the energetic Countess of Huntingdon and her daughters came to Llangeitho. This could not have been by any means her first visit to Wales, for Horace Walpole, speaking of Lord Chesterfield's last illness and death (1770-1773), tells us in one of his notes on Maty's Memoirs of the illustrious letter-writer that :—

" Lady Huntingdon [and her daughters] thinking that the Earl's bad health offered a good opportunity of getting at his soul, had a scheme of drawing him down to one of their seminaries in Wales, and visited him with that view ; but imagining they had great cunning, they said nothing of their pious motives, but cried up ' the goodness of the air, and the beauties of the spot, its charming views—and then there were such glorious mountains round it.' ' No, ladies,' said the Earl, ' I do not love such tremendous prospects. When the faith of your ladyships has removed the mountains, I will go to Wales with all my heart.' " The precise place of Rowlands' interment at Llangeitho is unknown, but a modern statue perpetuates the memory of the man who for half a century " lit with his tongue of fire the furnaces in which Wales has been smelted into its present shape." For many people outside Wales, Llangeitho is a shrine, and it would not be easy to find a more beautiful or picturesque place of pilgrimage. From thence the transition to " Sweet Ayron's Vale " is both easy and natural. At Llangeitho one realizes the full force of Henry KirkeWhite's charming lines—

> " Give me a cottage in some Cambrian wild,
> Where far from cities I may spend my days,
> And, by the beauties of the scene beguiled,
> May pity man's pursuits and shun his ways."



ABERDOVEY.

LLYFNANT VALLEY.

ABERAYRON HARBOUR.

ABERAYRON SANDS.

XVIII.—Aberayron and the Ayron Valley. The Railway from Lampeter to Aberayron.

On the Shores of Cardigan Bay. Llanrhystyd, New Quay, Llangranog and Aberporth.

TO the holiday-maker in search of novelty as well as change and amusement, the village watering-places of Cardigan Bay afford a congenial field for exploration. The names of some of them are practically unknown outside the boundaries of the "Sweet Shire," but since the completion of the short line from Lampeter to Aberayron through the Aberayron Valley and the "linking up" of Llanrhystyd, Aberayron and New Quay by a road-motor service with various points (already enumerated) on the main Great Western Line from Carmarthen to Aberystwyth, it is an open secret that at many delightful spots on the Cardigan coast, excellent bathing, clean if homely accommodation, good fare and fishing far above the average, can be obtained at a cost which pleasantly recalls the modest bills of a century ago, printed in the pages of Warner and his contemporaries.

Aberayron and its valley, however, have been famous ever since Sir Samuel Rush Meyrick* published his "History of

* Mr. Bradley calls him first "J" and then Sir Thomas Meyrick, while Miss Lewes, the author of a capital little guide to the town and neighbourhood, styles him Merrick *tout court*.

Cardigan " and gave Wales and the world at large the artless but tuneful verses :—

" Sweet Ayron's Vale, unknown in song,
Demands the warbling lyre;
Shall silver Ayron glide along,
And not a bard inspire?
What bard that Ayron sees can fail
To sing the charms of Ayron's Vale?

" There golden treasures swell the plains,
And herds and flocks are there,
And there the God of plenty reigns,
Triumphant all the year;
The nymphs are gay,
The swains are hale,
Such blessings dwell in Ayron's Vale.

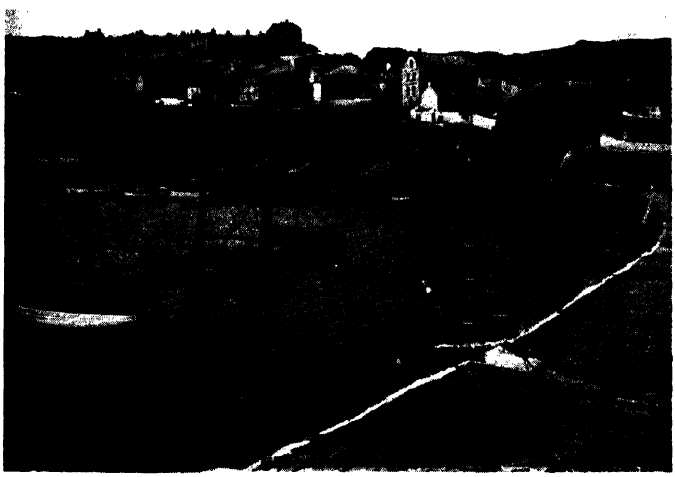
" Were I possessed of regal state,
Presiding o'er a nation,
With crowding senates at my feet,
In humble adoration,
I'd envy, if envying might avail,
The happy swains of Ayron's Vale."

For Mr. A. G. Bradley Ayron's Vale possessed more powerful charms than either Aberystwyth or the Devil's Bridge, and he broke his journey westwards from Strata Florida to Cardigan and Kemaes Land to traverse it from end to end, and apparently never regretted the detour. At the time he was collecting material for the " Highways and Byways of South Wales," Aberayron was decidedly out of the beaten track, and its votaries congratulated themselves on its inaccessibility, for Aberayron has had a season of some sort ever since the reign of George III. For nine months out of the twelve it was what Longfellow describes as :—

" A region of repose . . .
A place of slumber and of dreams
Remote among the wooded hills."

But in July and August one might seek in vain for a bed in Aberayron, despite the conspicuous absence of nearly all the staple attractions of a popular watering-place. Exactly a hundred years have rolled away since the existing strong stone pier was built, in the days when ships built at Aberayron still enjoyed good repute. The secret of the popularity of Aberayron

New Quay.



The Harbour, New Quay.

River Ayron.

Llangranog.

lies in the purity of its air, the beauty of its scenery, the wealth of its old-world associations, and the picturesqueness of the flower-strewn hinterland through which the Ayron River winds westwards to the sea. "To a town's man," says Nicholas, in his description of Cardiganshire, "a visit to a place like the Vale of Ayron, so quiet, so fragrant, so fair, is not so much like a journey from London to Wales, as from earth to elysium." The Hengeraint Woods form one of the principal glories of this idyllic valley. Miss Lewes in no way exaggerates their loveliness when she writes of the magnificent oaks "climbing the hillside, bending like ancient warriors in the ascent, their rugged trunks buried deep in a tangle of wild roses, fern and foxgloves." Mr. Bradley approached Aberayron from Lampeter, and wisely determined to travel slowly towards the sea, so as to enjoy the sylvan charms of Llanfihangel Ystrad to the utmost. Shelley himself had sung long ago of the Ayron Valley in August, and in spring-time, centuries before that, ap Gwilym—the poet who sleeps below the yew tree at Strata Florida, had pictured the Ayron skylark as :—

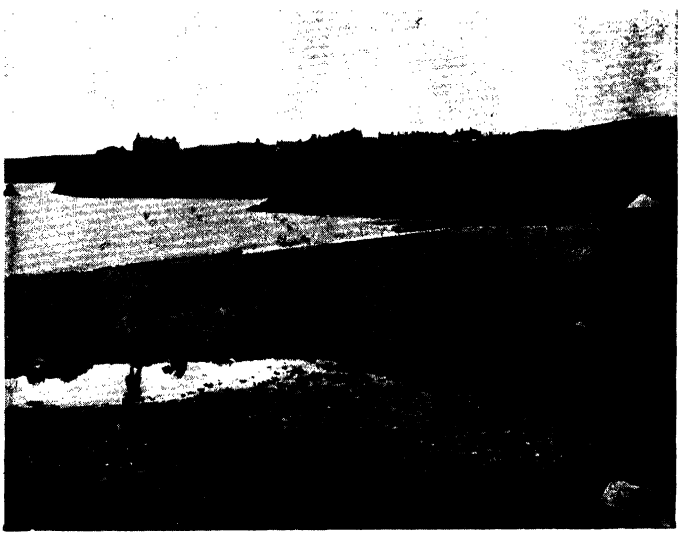
> "Far from thy brethren of the woods alone,
> A hermit chorister before God's throne."

If the application of the epithet "Garden of Wales" to the portion of Cardiganshire lying between Aberystwyth and the border-lands of Pembrokeshire needs any justification at all, it may be found most assuredly on the banks of the Ayron, and at a dozen places between Lampeter and the quaint little harbour over which men pass in a sort of basket, drawn by cords, and known as the "Aberayron Express." Llangeitho has already been spoken of at some length. The reader will have no difficulty (with the united help of Mr. Bradley and Miss Lewes) in finding his way to Ty-glyn and Ty-glyn Ayron, to Llan-Ayron and the old church at Llanerch Ayron, or to the shady groves of Hengeraint. If the charms of flickering sunshine and falling water leave leisure for the ascent of Trichrug, a view can be obtained of "Ayron's Vale," which will richly repay the fatigue of the climb of twelve hundred feet. The Ayron was once

famous for salmon, sewin and trout. The fishing is nowadays scarcely as good as formerly, and it is whispered that river-poaching has from time immemorial been reckoned amongst the "joys of Ayron's Vale." It is possibly a more profitable form of amusement than being swung across the harbour by the rope ferry or "carriage bach." Like Aberystwyth, Aberayron should soon attract its quota of winter visitors.

In many ways New Quay, five miles to the west of Aberayron, resembles Tenby. The sea-bathing there is excellent, and it possesses long stretches of fine sand, and a well-built pier. It is situated very nearly midway between Aberystwyth and Cardigan. The houses on the front are arranged in terraces, which give the place a somewhat strange appearance when seen either from Aberayron or the sea. The road-motor service between Llandyssul and New Quay is likely to assist materially in the development of a watering-place which possesses so many of the necessary qualifications for rapidly becoming a prosperous health and pleasure resort. New Quay, moreover, is by no means a bad travel centre, being within easy reach of the Ayron Valley and other points of interest. As at Aberayron, trading vessels carry on a brisk trade with both Liverpool and Bristol. In clear weather the outline of Snowdon can be faintly seen, and Cader Idris is always visible. Good lodgings can generally be obtained at New Quay, which has always enjoyed a certain vogue, dating back to times when coaches ran on the road now traversed by the road-motors of the Great Western, and smuggling entered very largely into its social economy. Llangranog, Poppit, Tresaith, Penbryn and Aberporth divide a certain amount of local patronage between them, and now the difficulty of access is overcome they may all five look forward to share in the general prosperity which beyond doubt awaits both the "Garden of Wales" and its hinterland.

TRESAITH.



ABERPORTH.

River Teify, Newcastle Emlyn.

Castle Ruins, Newcastle Emlyn.

XIX.—Cardigan and Gwbert-on-Sea, Teifyside, Newcastle Emlyn and Cenarth. A Piscatorial Paradise.

A STRAIGHT line drawn across South Wales from the Bristol Channel to Cardigan Bay would pass through both Tenby and Cardigan. The ancient capital of Cardiganshire may be approached in a variety of ways. A branch line from Whitland to Cardigan passes through Kilgerran and skirts a portion of Kemaes Land (see Chapter XIV.). From Fishguard, Cardigan can be reached every week day by the picturesque coast route in a couple of hours by one of the Great Western road-motors calling at Newport and other villages *en route*. If you leave the main line from Carmarthen to Aberystwyth at Pencader, you can travel through the beautiful scenery of Teifyside to Newcastle Emlyn, and a motor omnibus from the latter place takes passengers on to Cardigan, a distance of only ten miles. Below Lampeter the Teify forms, first the southern, and then the western, boundary of the "Sweet Shire." The high-road which follows its course is sometimes in one county and sometimes in another. Newcastle Emlyn is on the Carmarthenshire side of the river. As an ardent fisherman and lover of nature, Mr. Bradley disdained all the routes now given, and apparently followed the frontier-road from Lampeter, breaking his journey to enjoy the loveliness and the folk-lore of such charming places as Llanybyther. Llandyssul (now the point of departure of the

road-motor to New Quay), Henllan Bridge and so to Newcastle Emlyn. He frankly warns his readers that the Teify valley must not, in any sense, be regarded as " a continuous artery of travel," but the enthusiastic disciple of " Old Isaak," at any rate, will long to know more of Llandyssul, where " the Teify frets in its rocky bed to race afterwards beneath a one-arched bridge in a channel so contracted that it is difficult to imagine it the same river which, many miles higher up, spreads into pools so wide at times that the greatest effort with the trout rod will hardly cover them. And, by this token, Llandyssul is the best fishing station on the river." The fishing of the Teify is better than it was a few years since, and sewin now ascends it in increasing numbers. Every dweller in Teifyside is a fisherman and player of football from his earliest youth. Good Friday is the favourite day for the supreme struggle for pre-eminence in the last-mentioned form of sport between district and district, and parish and parish.

Newcastle Emlyn is almost encircled with green hills. A three-arch bridge over the Teify connects Emlyn with the old borough of Adpar. The stream very nearly encircles the mound once crowned with the stronghold which gave the town its first name, the second being by tradition of Roman origin, although there are no traces now visible of a Roman occupation of Teify-side. At Newcastle Emlyn we again meet with our old friends Sir Rhys ap Thomas and Llewelyn the Great. The grandson of the latter held a peace conference here with the commissioners of Henry III., which ended in treachery and a tragedy. After the attainder of ap Thomas's grandson, the Vaughans of Golden Grove reigned at Newcastle Emlyn, and through them the castle and barony has passed to their successors, the Earls Cawdor, During the Civil Wars, Vaughan Lord Carbery garrisoned the place for King Charles. It was closely besieged by the Parliamentarians, but relieved by Colonel Gerard after a keenly contested battle outside the walls. The present appearance of Newcastle Emlyn is redolent of peace and tranquillity. There is nothing except a few ivy-clad ruins in the " Sweet Shire " of to-day to remind you of the Civil Wars, or of those still more

troublous times during the three centuries which followed the Norman Conquest when, as the old chroniclers tell us,

"The green sea brine of Teifi thickened. The blood of warriors and the waves of ocean swelled its tide."

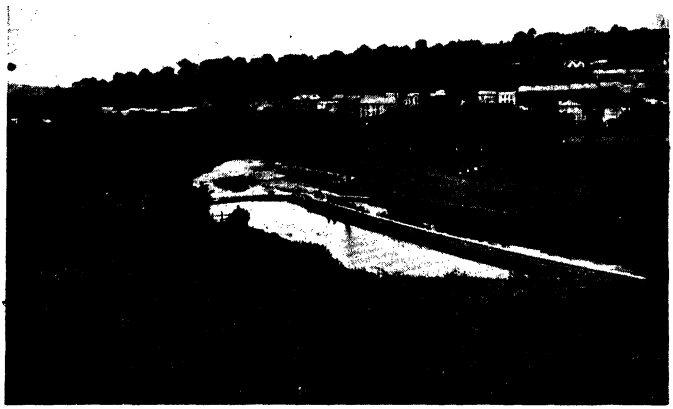
The holiday-maker should on no account quit the "Garden of Wales" without seeing what he can of Teifyside. For the fisherman that portion of the limpid stream now described possesses the strongest attractions, and there are certainly few more delightful spots in South Wales than Cenarth, where (three miles still nearer Cardigan) the "Sweet Shire" is once more gained by an ancient bridge of two arches, close to the well-known salmon leap and the rock-bound pool of the coracle fishers. At Cenarth the coracle has outlived everything else, including the romantic story of Nest, which some authorities accredit to another village of the same name in Pembrokeshire. The Cenarth coracle men ply their calling merrily, undismayed by the fact that they have been stigmatized by a standard authority as the sworn enemies of every rod-fisher between their birthplace and Strata Florida. A century ago there was grumbling at Cenarth because salmon was scarce and "cost 6*d*. a pound, instead of a penny a fish as heretofore!"

We will suppose that the holiday-maker has found his way to Cardigan by one or other of the routes indicated at the commencement of this chapter. He will assuredly not regret his stay there, be he fisherman, antiquarian, or simple sight-seer, for Aberteify ("the town on the Teify"), as the Welsh call or called the venerable capital of Cardiganshire, is full of interest both as regards the present and past, and is an excellent travel-centre for the exploration of the western portion of the "Garden of Wales," or the sites and scenes of Kemaes Land. Cardigan is not one iota a less pleasant place to stay in because Nature has not endowed her with the makings of a future Cardiff or Liverpool, and her inhabitants have no ambition in that direction, although they may possibly resent the transfer of the assizes to ecclesiastical Lampeter. To speak of Cardigan as "decaying" or "somnolent" is manifestly unjust. Those responsible for its future are well aware of its many-sided

attractions for all classes of travellers and holiday-makers. Where can better bathing or deep-sea fishing be found than at Gwbert-on-Sea, which can be reached in forty minutes or less by the beautiful Coronation Drive and Nantyferwig? Where can the antiquarian find more fertile subjects for investigation than at Kilgerran Castle or St. Dogmaels Abbey, not to mention the ninth century cross and " ogam " stone at Nevern?* Where is there a finer motor coach ride than that offered by the Great Western Railway Service from Cardigan to Fishguard, which traverses country renowned for its villages, hills and secluded valleys? Where will the angler for salmon, sewin or trout find more promising chances of sport than in the waters of the Teify, or some of its less known but not less fruitful tributaries? Hotel and other accommodation at Cardigan is both good and reasonable, and the ancient stone bridge of five arches is in perfect artistic accord with the other historical relics of an eventful past which include a venerable church and the moss-grown remains of a once famous castle, standing on a wooded mound commanding a view of the port which was already old five centuries ago. Cardigan may be " the Ultima Thule of towns," but for all that, it is a place which may be visited and revisited with enjoyment. A tour through the " Garden of Wales " may either begin or end at the old-world town which for two centuries gave title to the Brudenels, including the commander of the 11th Hussars at the famous charge of the Light Brigade. The eldest son of the Marquis of Ailesbury is still known as Earl of Cardigan.

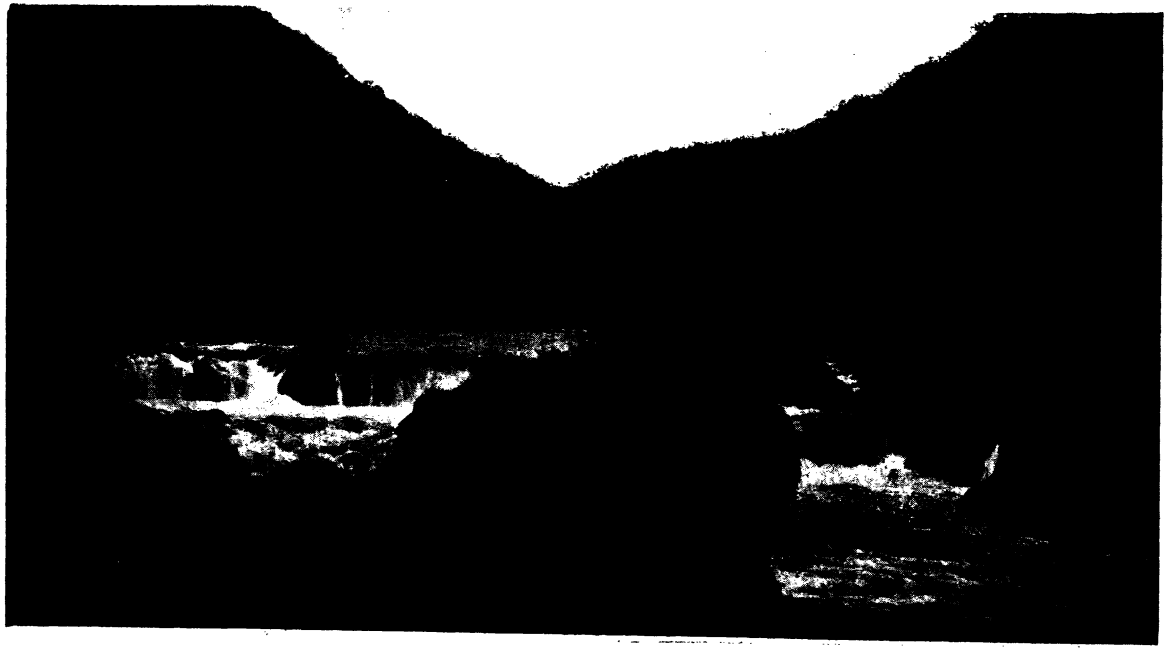
The annals of " Aberteify " have been very lucidly set forth in an " Official Guide Book," published by the same progressive association as the excursion leaflet already alluded to. Some of the ancient charters of Cardigan (notably one from Richard II.) are exceedingly curious, and the silver Corporation maces were given to the town by James Philipps as far back as 1647. In James I.'s reign, John Speed visited Cardigan, and described the Castle as " spacious and fayre," although somewhat out of repair, but it nevertheless sustained a stout

* In the useful little leaflet describing nine most enjoyable driving excursions issued by the energetic Town Improvement Committee, Kemaes is given as Cemaes, Kilgerran as Cilgerran, St. Dogmaels as St. Dogmell's, and so forth.



LLANDYSSUL.

CENARTH BRIDGE.



CENARTH FALLS.

siege some five and thirty years later, before General Langhorne carried it by storm for the Parliamentarians. Almost every page of this model "official guide" is suggestive of some new walk or drive, while in the appendix will be found a good deal of useful, and, for the most part, novel and reliable information about the chequered career of Cardigan Castle, the genesis of the coracle still used at Cenarth, the Ogam Stones and Ogmic inscriptions of which Llanarth Cross is an example, and the trout fishing by coracle at Llechryd (between Cenarth and Cardigan), together with a list of useful books on local history ranging from Giraldus Cambrensis and Speed to Sir S. R. Meyrick and the Rev. T. Rees. No less than eight pages are devoted to sport, and holiday-makers will be glad to learn that modern Cardigan can boast Clubs devoted to the promotion of Cycling, Lawn Tennis, Croquet and Golf. The Links are on the Burrows between Nantyferwig Bridge and Gwbert, and all information about them can be obtained by writing to the Hon. Sec. of the Golf Club. The author adds that "the water of the Teify is so pure and clear that a plunge into it from a boat is at all times and at nearly all places both practicable and pleasurable." Not only has the Cardigan Regatta been revived with success, but no effort is spared to popularize boating both on sea and river. The Teify water-concerts, started a few years ago, gave abundant promise of success. Hockey and football (the latter according to Rugby rules) are played during the winter, but possibly the phenomenal opportunities which the district offers in the matter of all sorts of fishing account for a certain lukewarmness as far as cricket is concerned. The powers of the Teify Board of Conservators are wisely and vigilantly exercised.

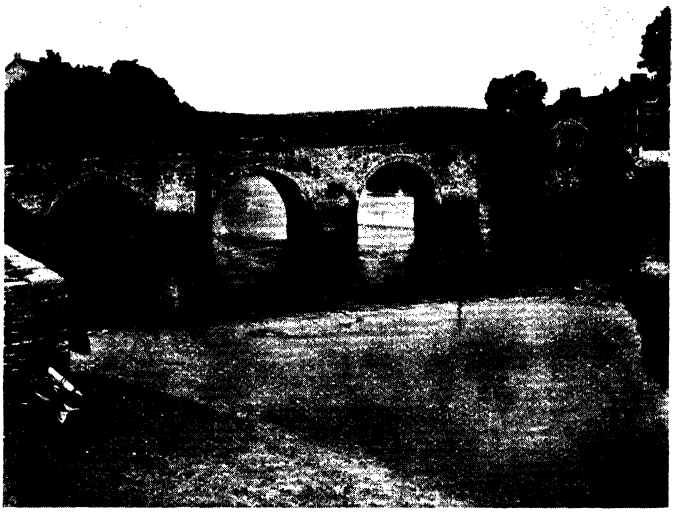
This is what the writer of the "Guide to Cardigan" has to tell us about the salmon and trout fishing :—

"*Salmon.*—The Teify salmon are noted as being among the best in the kingdom. In the estuary and on the lower river they are taken with the large seine-net, from Cardigan up to Cenarth with the coracle-seine net, and above that with rod and line. The upper water fishing is not as good as it should

be; the fish, going up to spawn, are unable to ascend Cenarth Falls except in a freshet, and while waiting below in a *cul-de-sac* are invariably (and illegally) taken; even as far back as the time of Giraldus 'Carnarch Mawr' was noted as having '*a productive fishery!*' The Cenarth 'Fish-trap,' as it is called, is the curse of the river. However, some few must manage to escape capture, for the number of salmon in the river is maintained at a fairly constant average, and very good sport is occasionally had with rod and line in the neighbourhood of Llandyssul and Lampeter. The river is, of course, preserved by the riparian owners, but some miles may be had for a rental exceedingly moderate in comparison with that paid for most salmon fishing. A salmon (rod and line) licence for the season costs one pound, but licences for one month are issued at half a guinea. They may be obtained in Cardigan of Mr. A. Clougher, Stationer, High Street.

"*Trout.*—Excellent trout-fishing is to be had in the Teify and its numerous tributaries. In the former, good-sized fish, running occasionally up to 2 lbs., are to be caught, and a coracle is the best means of obtaining these, although good execution can also be done with 'waders.' But the majority killed in it are the average brook trout mostly well under one pound. For trout-fishing the Teify (as accessible from Cardigan) appears to be free water."

The minor streams near Cardigan are well worth the attention of anglers, and the writer of the "guide" gives much useful information about the Ceri, the Cych and the Nevern River. Trout licences for the season cost but half a crown. Towards autumn sewin gives good sport to fly-fishers and bass may be trolled for below Cardigan Bridge. Shrimps abound in the estuary; mackerel and rock-pollack may be captured in abundance off the coast; lobsters are plentiful, and the crabbing ground at Careg Lydan is far above the average. To sportsmen who visit Cardigan in winter—and the mild climate affords every temptation to make the experiment—the meets of the Teifyside Foxhounds can hardly fail to prove an attraction. The kennels are at Llechryd, and the size of the pack enables the



CARDIGAN BRIDGE.

GWBERT-ON-SEA.

River Irfon at Builth Wells.

master to hunt two days a week. The great majority of the meets are within striking distance of Cardigan. A pack of beagles is kept at Bronwydd, beyond Newcastle Emlyn, and it should be also noted that during the summer the Teify and its tributaries afford profitable occupation to two packs of otter hounds.

* * * * *

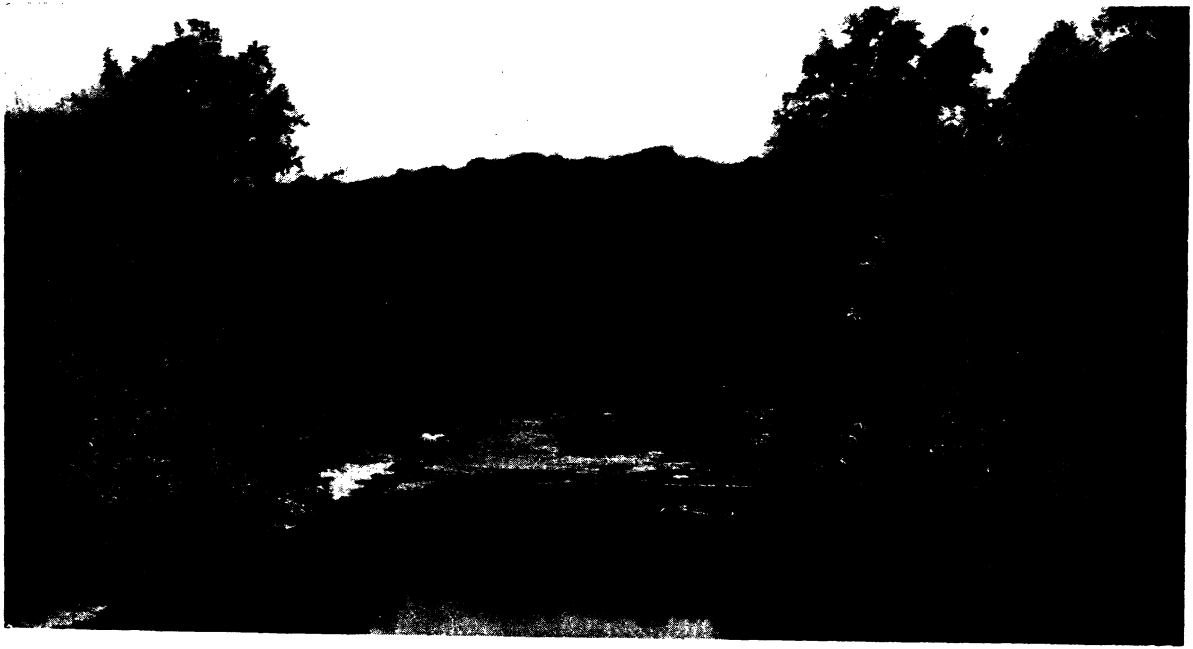
That the beautiful "Garden of Wales" is fast becoming one of the most popular holiday-haunts of the United Kingdom there can be no doubt.

The important changes described in the introduction to these pages have already worked wonders, and much must necessarily now depend on the policy adopted by those most materially interested in the further development and increased prosperity of the "Country of Castles." In any case it must be conceded that the opportunities of Cardiganshire are as great as those possessed by any other portion of that most interesting corner of the King's dominions for which Dame Nature has done so much.

XX.—Spas and Inland Resorts—Builth Wells, Llangammarch Wells, Llandrindod Wells and Llanwrtyd Wells.

VISITORS to South Wales can easily reach by fast trains, via Cardiff, four famous Welsh inland resorts, where they are given the opportunity of enjoying modern Spa treatment, combined with ideal holiday conditions. The Great Western Railway service from Barry to Builth Wells, Llangammarch Wells, Llanwrtyd Wells, and Llandrindod Wells is an object lesson of what has been accomplished by the amalgamation of railways in this area, under one management, as the outcome of the Railways Act, 1921. There is now in operation a through service from Barry, via Cardiff, to Builth Wells—a journey in which six railways were hitherto involved, which is now accomplished throughout, by the Great Western Railway. The service is continued from Builth Road to Llandrindod Wells over the London, Midland and Scottish Railway. To develop further, these four Spas, the Great Western Railway has a frequent rail-motor service between Brecon (a fine touring centre), Builth-Road, Rhayader, Llanidloes, and Moat Lane junction, which traverses the finest parts of the valley of the Upper Wye, and gives splendid views of the Brecknockshire and Radnorshire mountain ranges.

The railway journey from Barry to Builth Road, after leaving Merthyr, enters beautiful country. Between Torpantau (a most convenient station for climbing the Brecon Beacons) and



VIEW FROM THE PUMP HOUSE, LLANGAMMARCH WELLS

In Rock Park, Llandrindod Wells.

Talybont, is the lonely Glyn Valley, while just beyond Talybont, with its vistas of the valley of the luscious Usk, is Llangorse Lake, celebrated for its boating and fishing. Above Three Cocks Junction, the Great Western Railway commences to run parallel with the Wye, and gives access to the delightful districts of Boughrood and Erwood. Just before reaching Builth Wells, the train passes close to Aberedw, with its wonderful rocks, the formation of which points to the time which their bases were washed by the sea.

Builth Wells is famous for its saline and sulphur springs, which clear affections of the skin rapidly. Builth appeals to the visitor, not only through the magic charm of the natural surroundings, but by its associations with memorable events in early Welsh history. Within the purlieus of the picturesque town there are traces linking up the dim past with the present. Fossils tell of the time when the sea covered the country-side; the hills and valleys speak of the glacial period, and there are signs that the early cave and lake dwellers once made this district their habitat. Seventeen years ago the excavation of a hut and grave threw light upon the people of a later, and yet still very remote period. Roman remains, too, have been discovered, pointing to the possibility of Builth having been the stronghold of some of Cæsar's Legions. Two castles existed at Builth in the 12th and 13th centuries. The first castle was partially destroyed by Llewellyn, and the second, completed by Edward I. in 1282, was the strongest of its kind in the country. Builth saw the final scenes of the famous struggle of Llewellyn Ap Gruffydd for independence. Sir John Oldcastle—who was burnt as a heretic for supporting the Lollards—held the castle during the rebellion of Owen Glendower. The district around Builth Wells is free from great extremes of temperature, and the fine mountain air is beneficial to infirm and strong alike.

Much of the fame of Llandrindod Wells is due to the character of its rich setting among a group of verdant hills that stretch far and wide around this Spa in the uplands of Central Wales. It would, indeed, be difficult to find a more favourable situation for a perfect health resort, and it is not surprising,

therefore, that this place has been famous for many years for its curative waters, the bracing qualities of its pure mountain air and its restful atmosphere. Clearly recognising its many natural advantages, and desiring that the visitor shall share in them fully, the resort has wisely added to rare beauty, just comfort and nothing more. No suggestion of artificial improvement is to be found in and around this retreat. The Springs first became known in 1696, but it was not until thirty years later, with the discovery of the old Sulphur Spring, that the fame of Llandrindod Wells spread abroad. The Springs are classed as muriated, and include Sulphuretted Salines and Chalybeates; they are considered highly beneficial for the cure of many conditions of ill-health, and especially for inflammatory tissues of the body, due to gout or rheumatic attacks in certain subjects, for derangements of the digestive system, and for toxiemic conditions generally. The waters give relief in most cases of anaemia, and the dry bracing climate renders the Spa a suitable place of residence for those who are otherwise in a delicate state of health. In and around Llandrindod Wells are many opportunities for outdoor exercises, including golf, bowls and tennis, while anglers will find good sport.

Llangammarch Wells stands 560 feet above sea-level at the junction of the rivers Yrfon and Gammarch, a spot particularly famed for its beauty and for its climate. Autumn merges into winter here, with hardly perceptible variance. There is a delightful charm about this peaceful resort. Its sequestered valleys, with their appealing beauty at all seasons of the year, are favourite haunts for the wayfarer, who loves Nature in her kindlier moods, while the rugged cliffs of the Welsh Highlands are a joy to the mountaineer. The various medicinal waters of Llangammarch Wells are more especially valuable for those suffering from some form of functional heart trouble, such as nerve or muscular weakness. They are of benefit also for neurasthenic subjects, and of tonic value for persons suffering from a state of exhaustion brought on by an overworked condition of the system generally; for jaded nerves, and some forms of indigestion.

Llanwrtyd Wells, a picturesque Brecknockshire Spa, delightfully situated sixteen miles beyond Llandrindod, near the river Yrfon, has an elevation of about 800 feet above sea level. It is a sequestered resort, with a charm long cherished by the visitor. In winter frost is almost unknown, and in summer the hottest days are tempered by mountain breezes. The Dolecoed Sulphur Spring, with an output of 4,500 gallons daily, is claimed to be the best of its kind in the Kingdom. The medicinal waters of the natural springs of the Spa are various in composition—some are highly sulphurated and of great potency in the cure for rheumatism, gout and sciatica. They are of special value also in the treatment of skin troubles, more particularly for those arising from an impoverished state of the blood. Eczema even of the most obstinate character, generally yields speedily to a proper course of treatment, and many medical men are of an opinion that these waters are of specific value in cases of more serious forms of skin trouble. Affections of the joints, too, are relieved by continued application, and the waters are sometimes prescribed for bronchial and other chest troubles. The baths are most beneficial for the complexion.

The record for relief and cure of many ills is a high one at Llanwrtyd Wells, and, as the climate is very bracing, this resort is frequented by many, who need to take the modified " open air cure." It is besides a place of wonderful repute for the cure of neurasthenia, and nerve troubles generally. Sportsmen will find Llanwrtyd Wells makes a plentiful provision for them. There are two golf courses, and there is excellent fishing in the Yrfon and its tributaries.

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South Wales Golf Courses.

PLACE.	NAME OF CLUB.	No. of HOLES.
ABERDOVEY	Aberdovey Golf Club	18
ABERYSTWYTH	Aberystwyth Golf Club	18
BARGOED & ABERBARGOED	East Glamorgan Golf Club	9
BARRY	Bryn Hill Golf Club	9
BLAENAVON	Blaenavon Golf Club	9
BORTH	Borth and Ynyslas	18
BRECON	Brecon Golf Club	9
BRIDGEND	Southerndown Golf Club	18
BRITON FERRY or BRITON FERRY RD.	Swansea Bay Golf Club	18
BUILTH WELLS	Builth Wells Golf Club	9
CAERPHILLY	Caerphilly Golf Club	9
CARDIFF	Cardiff Golf Club	18
	Radyr Golf Club	18
CARDIGAN	Cardigan (Gwbert-on-Sea) Golf Club	9
CARMARTHEN or CONWIL	Carmarthen Golf Club	9
DINAS POWIS (NEAR CARDIFF)	Dinas Powis Golf Club	18
FISHGUARD & GOODWICK	Fishguard Golf Club	9
GILESTON	Barry Golf Club	9
GOWERTON	Garnoch Golf Club	9
HAVERFORDWEST	Haverfordwest Golf Club	9
HAVERFORDWEST (or Mathry Road)	St. David's City Golf Club	9
LAMPETER	Lampeter Golf Club	9
LLANDILO	Llandilo Golf Club	9
LLANDOVERY	Llandovery Golf Club	9
LLANDRINDOD WELLS	Llandrindod Wells Golf Club	18 (two)
LLANARCH AERON	Aberayron (Llanayron) Golf Club	9
LLANGAMMARCH WELLS	Llangammarch Wells Golf Club	18
LLANIDLOES	Llanidloes Golf Club	9
LLANISHEN	Llanishen Golf Club	9
LLANWRTYD WELLS	Llanwrtyd Wells Golf Club	9
LLWYNPIA	Rhondda Golf Club	18
MAESTEG	Maesteg Golf Club	9
MERTHYR	Cilsanws Golf Club	9
	Morlais Castle Golf Club	9
MILFORD HAVEN	Milford Haven Golf Club	9
MORRISTON	Morriston Golf Club	18

SOUTH WALES GOLF COURSES

—continued.

PLACE.	NAME OF CLUB.	No. of HOLES.
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NANTYGLO	West Monmouthshire Golf Club	18
NEATH	Swansea Bay Golf Club	18
PEMBREY and BURRY PORT ..	Ashburnham Golf Club	18
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PONTYPRIDD	Pontypridd Golf Club	18
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