

those large irregularly-built mansions to be found in various parts of England. Houses in which you may lose yourself, and yet with all this room, often exceedingly uncomfortable except in the modernized and improved portions. The low, dark rooms, heavy, gloomy-looking furniture, black oaken stairs, leading to unexplored localities; closets dark as crebus; and long passages terminating nowhere in particular, unless in a blank wall. Occasionally you may enter a chamber by crossing a lower portion of roof, leaded over, and out of this you open to a stair, which ascends to a turret: or descending, you land in a *terra incognita*, the rooms tapestried with numberless cobwebs hanging in thick festoons,—an earthy, decaying smell pervades the atmosphere, which feels heavy, and chills the body,—an oppressive breathing soon follows, and you are glad to find a broken casement where you can get a mouthful of fresh air. Your guide informs you that this part of the hall has been shut up for many years, but cannot say exactly how long.

In a small parlor you notice a dark stain, and you are informed in a whisper, that here was enacted a dreadful tragedy, and that occasionally a man in full dress armour, has been seen looking from the windows, or heard with heavy tread, pacing the floors. The wainscotted walls echo your footsteps, and you are in momentary expectation that some one of the panels will slide back in its frame and discover this ghostly warrior with stern countenance, beckoning you to follow him into subterraneous or unknown apartments, to reveal some fearful mystery which has for years prevented his repose.

You become nervous, and, under the pretext that your curiosity is fully gratified, you hurry your leisurely guide to return to a healthier atmosphere and better light. Your guide, who is something of a wag, in a dull way, wonders whether you would not like to see the vaults, where it is said two knights were nearly starved to death by getting accidentally shut in and forgotten; you shudder, and feel a stifling sensation, and dropping the man his shilling, hurry along to freedom and daylight, feeling thankful that although you bear the name of your father, (because it is considered disreputable, and often inconvenient in law, if through accident or informality you have to bear your mother's) you have no historical namesake,—an ancestor, compelled by mysterious influences to wander among deserted rooms, along dreary corridors, up and down cold, desolate stairways, dressed in heavy armour, and probably very rusty at that, with no friendly armourer to remove the heavy covering; you shudder at the thought, and as you emerge into the light of day, you try to shake yourself free from oppressive, melancholy reflections,—the incubus of superstition. Wytcher Hall, or as the old people called it, "Heal Wytcher," was a Saxon mansion, but Lady Wytcher was of Norman descent, and very partial to everything which reminded her of the fact. A great part of the furniture had at different periods, come from the continent or been made by workmen in the Norman style. Much of this furniture was in excellent condition, covered with a heavy coating of wax, which shone like fine varnish;