

Nestling among the trees is a lovely cottage which is famous in many parts of the world as "The Owlery." This delicious retreat is lent by Lord and Lady Aberdeen to such of their friends as may need rest and quiet; and, as the visitors' book will testify, many a tired brain has found soothing rest under this hospitable roof, and many a weary worker has had cause to bless the good foundress of the "Owlery."

As the road winds through a grove of trees, one sees a homestead larger than the rest, with every detail about the house and grounds kept in the most scrupulous and perfect order, even the brass name-plates on the wagons, with "The Earl of Aberdeen" in bold letters, being polished to the utmost pitch of brilliancy. This comfortable and substantial building is the Mains of Haddo, the "home-farm," the residence of his Excellency's very efficient agent, Mr. George Muirhead, a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, a gentleman of considerable literary attainments, a keen sportsman, and, it need not be said, an accomplished and thorough man of business.

A little further, and on the brow of a hill, is seen a flag flying from a pretty cottage. This is "Holiday Cottage," where their Excellencies' children play at housekeeping in a very realistic and business-like fashion.

The road winds up and down, through finely-wooded slopes, and past the lofty column commemorating the death of General Sir Alexander Gordon, his Excellency's great uncle, who was killed at the battle of Waterloo; and now a glimpse of the Union Jack floating above the tree-tops indicates that we are at last approaching the mansion-house itself. Presently the drive takes a bold sweep, and we find ourselves at the north front of a stately mansion, on the walls of which the three boars' heads of the Gordons are quartered with the cinquefoils and lymphads of the Hamiltons.

The house cannot be designated,

even by those who know it and love it best, as beautiful; and yet it has a dignified grandeur, which seems to scorn any pretensions to beauty. Its simple, but not unimpressive solidity, is characteristically Scottish; and the heavy masses of foliage which surround it on all sides tone down the rectangular lines of grey stone, which might otherwise have too stern an effect.

The great central block which composed the original house and which was built in 1782 by the second Earl has been expanded by the addition of two spacious wings, in one of which is the library, a fine room, containing many valuable and interesting volumes. The older mansion had been destroyed by fire, and it was apparently intended that at least the walls of the present building should not be demolished by the same means, for both the inner and outer walls are of immense thickness.

But the gem of Haddo House is its exquisite chapel, which was commenced by the present Earl in 1877, and completed at a cost of \$40,000. It was erected from designs by the late G. E. Street, R.A. The style is 13th century Gothic, and all the fittings and decorations are harmonious and complete, though there is nothing florid in the ornamentation. There is an exceptionally fine organ, by Willis & Son, and

"Storied windows, richly dight,
Casting a dim religious light."

In this beautiful building, it is the custom of the Earl of Aberdeen to gather his family and household for morning and evening worship, and as His Excellency adopts the maxim, "Every man a priest in his own house," he is on ordinary occasions his own chaplain. A stranger entering this chapel for the first time during the simple service cannot but be struck and touched by the patriarchal simplicity of the scene. The lord of thousands of acres, the descendant of