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SOME SUNDAYS ABROAD.

A SUNDAY AT WINDSOR CASTLE.

(From the Iowa Churchman.)

It was with a strong feeling of mingled interest and wonder that we awoke one Sunday morning in July to a conscientiousness that we were really domiciled for the nonce in a palace, and that palace the grandest royal residence in the world. We had come up from London the evening before at the kind invitation of the Dean to spend a Sunday in the Castle. We had seized the opportunity, as Her Majesty was in London on our arrival, to accompany our kind host in a ramble through the grounds, so beautiful and so attractive in their natural loveliness; and then we took a weary walk through the state apartments, so grand and glorious in their appointments as well as in their immensity. Ere we sat down to dinner with a number of notables—among them the celebrated authoress, Mrs. Oliphant, by and by, we felt quite at home in our royal quarters. After dinner and the evening prayers, we went to our rooms in the oldest part of the castle, where walls of massive thickness and black oaken beams of half-a-thousand years of age, told with full appreciation of the prospect of "tired nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep." From this sleep, as sound as it was sweet, we awoke as we have earlier described. The morning sunlight was streaming into the cloister into which our windows looked. Opposite were the oriel windows of Anne Boleyn's apartments, when she spent a brief space of her mottled life at the castle in 1532. It was here that she was created Marchioness of Pembroke with great pomp, and here, doubtless, this ill-starred queen spent some of the happiest days of her career. In the arcade below a sentinel had paced all through the livelong night for we were in a Royal residence, and with the dawn the great standard of England floated lazily from the Round Tower, betokening the presence of the Sovereign who had returned late the night before. And so all was alive, awake, in Windsor Castle. The bugle call rung out the morning reveille. The guards were at their places, and the very atmosphere of the spot betokened a consciousness on the part of everyone of the Queen's arrival at her home.

The day began with prayers in a bit of the old chapel, dating back to the time of Henry II, if not of even earlier date. Breakfast was laid in the dining hall of the Deanery, in which the headless body of King Charles I, "saint and martyr," was deposited the night preceding its burial, without the service of the Church the monarch loved so well, in the grave of King Henry VIII. It had been the wish of the murdered king that his body should be shrouded for the grave in a white pall, an emblem, doubtless, both of his innocence and of his undying faith. The surly regicides, hating with Puritanic hatred both Church and the Church offices, refused the dying wish, but on that sad January morn, the body, as it was hurriedly borne from its resting-place in this very room to St. George's Chapel, was covered by the gentle snow-flakes and the "white king" went to his sepulchre with his coveted pall of perfect purity. As we partook of our morning meal the blazoned screen which bore the heraldic bearings of the Knights of the Garter was our shield from the breeze that stole gently in through the latticed casements, and after the repast we looked upon the paroh-

ment pages of the records of this, the oldest and most noted order in Christendom.

The Dean had attended service in the Queen's private chapel at which the "household" formed the congregation. One of the Canons, the Incumbent of St. George's, Hanover Square, the Rev. Capel Cure, had been summoned to preach at the Mausoleum, at Frogmore, where the Queen herself usually attended service. But the great service of the day was at St. George's chapel, and there, placed in the stall over which hung the banner and suit of knightly armor and on the back of which was blazoned the armorial bearings of Prince Victor, the eldest son of the Prince of Wales, we took our part in a noble function—one of the grandest in which we had ever participated. The spectacle before our eyes was regal. For five centuries and a half has this chapel been a royal shrine. For the same length of time the successions of Deans and Canons has not been interrupted. Much of the glorious architecture on which we gazed claimed like antiquity. The very stones were associated with the scenes with which English history was eloquent. Long lines of kings and queens and princesses and nobles of high degree had trod these consecrated aisles—had stood and knelt and worshipped in this shrine. We could see from our seat at the right of that assigned to the Dean, whose stall is occupied by the Queen when a Chapter of the order of the Garter is convened, the flat stone covering the remains of King Charles I, and with them those of "Bluff King Hal" and his "true and loving wife, Queen Jane," beside whom he left explicit directions that he should be interred. The stalls about the three sides of the chapel, magnificent in their elaborate carving, and rendered even more picturesque by their surmounting of knightly armour and the blazoned silken banner of the occupant of the seat below, bear the names of the greatest monarchs of the world. And it is with this great "order" even more than with its royal associations, that the absorbing interest of St. George's chapel is allied. True though it is that the original sanctuary, in which King Edward III. held the first chapters of his newly founded order, has disappeared, still that which we see and are actually within, dates its inception to King Edward IV. The records of expenditures for the earlier structure still existing tell of the purchase of glass in A.D. 1363, and the payment of decorations 1365, and we know that this first structure, on the site of the present chapel, though hastily and perhaps carelessly erected, was thoroughly repaired under the care and oversight of Geoffrey Chaucer, as clerk of the works. In the old chapel there had transpired not only the installation of the first Knights of the Garter, but also the marriage of Edward, the Black Prince, to the "Fair Maid of Kent." It was in 1473 that the already dilapidated chapel was pulled down, and Richard Beauchamp, Bishop of Salisbury, was appointed to the office of surveyor of the new shrine. Bishops were builders in those days, and the Bishop of Salisbury labored with such "diligence and sedulity," we are told, that the grateful monarch made him Chancellor of the order, an office still held by the prelate of whose See Windsor forms a part. The work went slowly on through the reign of Edward IV, and on his death was continued by Richard III, and Henry VII, and in 1517 or 1518 the chapel was completed as we see it now. The vaulted roof of the choir, a noble piece of stone work, was contracted for, as the records tell us, by John Hylmer and William Vertue, "freemasons," in 1505.

The service was admirably rendered, one of the white-robed choristers attracting every one's attention by a voice of singular purity and power. The altar was resplendent in its array of gold sacramental vessels, and of the large congregation filling every seat of the choir and occupying the sittings far out in the

nave as well, a large number remained to receive the blessed Sacrament.

After lunch we wandered back into the chapel where, under the guidance of Canon Capel-Cure, we revived the memories of an earlier visit, and found ourselves treading on ground so full of associations as to require a volume for their record. We paused to examine on each side the chapels and chantries, and lingered long at the extraordinary monument erected by national subscription to the memory of the beloved and lamented Princess Charlotte, whose early and unexpected death left the throne open for Victoria the Good. We looked into the "queen's closet" on the north side of the altar, a place so screened from vulgar view that royalty can pray and praise without being too fully scanned by the wondering and curious crowd below. We read the quaint epitaphs on the wall and beneath our feet on the worn pavement. We examined the blazoned banners surmounting the stalls assigned to the gartered knights. We admired the grand effect of the noble nave so carefully restored. In fact, with so kind and capable a guide, there was no detail omitted, no spectacle withheld, and when our curiosity was sated we passed out into the open air, and then looked in at the Horseshoe Cloisters, and then passed down the hundred steps, and then, under the guidance of the Dean's lovely wife, a daughter of the late beloved Archbishop of Canterbury, we visited the Queen's private garden and quite enjoyed scenes of rural beauty seen by few. At length, returning through the Dean's gardens we paused for a while to note the far reaching view and its "distant prospect of Eton College," and then retraced our steps to the Deanery, from which we emerged to attend the evensong. Our party was seated as guests of the Dean in the royal stalls, one occupying that assigned to Oscar, King of Sweden, and bearing his blazoned arms; another having the one belonging to Humbert, King of Italy, and still another that bearing the heraldic device and name of an East Indian Prince, who alone of his race has attained the dignity of membership of the Order of the Garter. The service was exquisitely performed. One of the choristers had, as a lad, sung at the Coronation of the good Queen. He had sung, but a few days before, at the Jubilee service commemorating the Queen's fifty years of rule. We could hear this singer of half a century's choristership, and can testify that he still sings well. The anthem was nobly rendered, and the crowd of worshippers seemed to enter fully into the spirit of this service of song. We lingered after the evensong was over to hear the organ playing, finding it difficult to pass away while its brilliant chords, now loud, now low, sounded through every portion of this grand shrine. After dinner we again sought the chapel to see it with the rich moonlight streaming through its "storied windows, richly dight," lighting up the aisles and arches and vaulted roof, and bringing into brilliant relief the canopied stalls and coats of mail and blazoned banners and sculptured monuments, and all the glories of this splendid sanctuary. We staid amidst the silver moonbeams, now in light and now in shadow, till the measured tread of the guard in the cloisters reminded us that the day was well nigh over and that it was time for prayers and bed. It was not long before we had said good-night to our kind hosts, and we were snugly ensconced in our comfortable quarters, rebuilt in the time of Henry VII, but retaining many traces of the original, earlier construction. Our dreams were strange comminglings of the sad faced Chaucer and the giddy Anne Boleyn, the Black Prince, and the lamented Queen Eleanor. William of Wykeham, and the pious Philippa, whose death possibly in the very building we were sleeping in or in that then standing on its site, Froissart so touchingly describes. We