

CHAPTER V

THE AWAKENING

I HAVE often been enticed into dreams by the castles of Wales. English supremacy erected them—with all their strength and beauty—as a means of control and oppression. But after the lapse of many centuries their original purpose was abandoned. Conway has loosened its grip, and thrown open its girdle of towers, which enclose to-day a little prosperous Welsh village. At Carnarvon the inner courts are covered with grass, and the little town leads its peaceful life gathered round its now defenceless parapets, which it even points out to strangers with a certain touch of pride. Other castles are falling to pieces, kept together only by the ivy sprung from a soil which has recovered little by little what these hostile castles once strove to rob it of.