

Farnham Castle, the residence of the Bishop of Winchester—

"Au Dieu foy, aux amies foyer."

"To God, faith, to friends, a hearth."

The Montacute House, Somersetshire, boasts of at least three mottoes. Over the chief entrance we find the hospitable welcome—

"Through this wide opening gate,
None come too early, none return too late."

The second surmounts the north porch, making the visitors truly at home—

"And yours, my friends."

The third is inscribed over one of the lodges—

"Welcome the coming, speed the parting guest."

This last motto has been repeated at Pontnewidd House, Monmouthshire, painted round the cornice in the modern dining-room.

Kent supplies our collection with a specimen of house mottoes. At Lullington Castle, the seat of the Dykes (baronets), the following inscription surrounds a rose nearly two feet in diameter—

"Kentish true blue,
Take this as a token,
That what is said here,
Under the Rose is spoken."

There is a curious old inscription carved on wood, of the time of either Edward VI. or Mary I. in an ancient manor house in Yorkshire, viz. :—

"*Soli deo honor et gloria,*
I. H. C. for thy wounds smerte,
On thy fet and hondes two, make
me in x x x x x
x x x x x x x
ter is Povertie x x
nes then x x x ise
with soro and sadnes
I. H. C. kepe the Fownder.
Amen."

It is a pity that time should have obliterated so much of it.

At Skipton Castle, also in Yorkshire, there is a single word, inscribed in French, but with what special reference remains unexplained, viz., "*Desormais*," meaning "hereafter," or "from this time."

In the same county we find an appeal to the worshippers in Almondbury church under the date "1522."

"Thou man unkind, have in thy mind,
My bloody face;
My wounds wide, on every side,
For thy trespass,
Thou sinner hard, turn hitherward,
Behold thy Saviour free;
Unkind thou art, from me to depart,
When mercy I would grant thee."

And at Hardwick Hall we find—

"The conclusion of all things is, to feare God, and keepe his commandments."

There is an inscription in Greek on Conway Castle, which may be translated—

"Bear, and forbear," rather a curious motto for a feudal castle!

Over the door of a house at Towcester, Northamptonshire, we find a very sage little hint, which many would do well to remember—

"Hee that earneth wages
By labour and care. By
The blessing of God may
Have something to spare.—T. B., 1618."

Somewhat in a different spirit is the inscription, dating some years later, to be seen over the entrance-door of the Plough Inn, at Alnwick, the lines being written without reference to the comparative length of the lines, nor their due punctuation—

"That which your Father
Old hath purchased and left;
You to possess, do you dearly
Hold, to show his worthiness."

Taking a flight to Harleyford, Marlow, we find some thirty-one mottoes severally surmounting the doors. Of these I can only give a few examples, that over the portico at the entrance being a specially good one—

"If thou speakest evil of thy neighbour,
come not nigh the door of this house."

"Peace on Earth, good will towards women"

(a little change from the original, somewhat prophetic of the present day!).

"For God, Queen, and Country" (resembling the national motto of the Tyrol).

A very noteworthy piece of advice, anent the rules of good breeding, appears over another door, i.e.—

"In waiting for a late guest, insult is offered to the punctual ones."

Over that of another room—

"As creatures passing from time to eternity,
let us remember our bed may be the bridge."

Yet one more wise saying, worthy of special consideration, conclude my selection from this rich collection—

"An obedient wife governs her husband"

(a statement worth consideration—young wives, take note of it!).

Specimens of art very often accompany the inscriptions on and inside the houses of our predecessors. This is notably the case at Moreton Hall, Cheshire, a beautiful, two-storey, gabled house, thoroughly representative of the county. It is lined and decorated all over with characteristic outside beams, with which travellers in those and many other parts of England are familiar. In this picturesque mansion we find a figure of Fortune, on traversing the long gallery to the extreme end. It is carved in the panelling, and there is a representation of a wheel, bearing the Latin words—

"*Qui modo scandit corruet statim*,"

which means, "Who in a hurry climbs, will quickly fall." Underneath this there is a second line—

"The Wheel of Fortune, whose Rule is Ignorance."

At the eastern end of this gallery there is another figure, that of Fate, holding a globe in one hand, and in the other a pair of compasses (could a pair of scissors have been intended? we think so), and the explanatory lines—

"The Speare of Destiny,
Whose Rule is Knowledge."

Another of our admonition mottoes may be seen at an old half-ruined country-seat, called Earlsall, a few miles distant from St. Andrews. The panelled ceiling of the large hall was at one time covered with coats-of-arms, and the walls with inscriptions, which are now unfortunately unreadable, with little exception. Time, "the destroyer," and the continual changes of atmosphere, having touched them with "effacing fingers." The poor remains of one inscription reads as fol-

lows; the small crosses appear on the original, between the several words—

"Be x merrye x and x glad x honest x and x verteous. For x that x —flcet x the x anger x of x the x invious."

"Try x and x put x trust x —eeter x gude x assurance. Bot x trust x not x or x ye x try x for x fear x of x repentance."

There is a Latin motto surmounting the entrance of Benthall Hall, Shropshire—

"*Tende bene, et alta pete*,"

to be rendered in English, "Strive on well, and seek high place," otherwise, "maintain a high ideal, and let your aspirations and efforts be towards the best and highest."

Before giving any more specimens of the type with which I have commenced, the reader must be diverted with a few of a comic character. At Wymondham, Norfolk, one of this kind is to be found engraved on an oak board, all on one line, viz.—

"*Nec mihiglis servus, nec hospes herudo*."

This motto is cut in antique Roman capital letters, and translated from the Latin would be rendered thus—

"No Dormouse as a Servant for me;
Neither a Horse-Leech for a Guest."

(The word "glis" is not Latin.) In reading this shrewd advertisement, and warning to all who would seek a domicile within, it seems that the old-time owner of the house had had experience of a guest such as some years ago imposed her company on a friend of my own. She was a travelling acquaintance of a few hours only, and cunningly exerted herself—as an item of her "stock-in-trade"—to make herself specially agreeable. The bait took my hospitable but most unwary friend, and when parting at the post-town near her own country-house, she said that "If the pleasant stranger were ever passing that way again, she would be pleased to see her." What was her surprise and consternation when, without one word of warning, a cab drove up to her door covered with luggage, not a mere valise with the requirements of a night's sojourn, and the once fellow-traveller entered, saying sweetly, "You see, I have taken you at your word, and am come to pay you a visit." My poor friend endeavoured to smile blandly, though her Irish hospitality was being rudely taxed, and she had at once to prepare a room, and make new housekeeping arrangements. A week passed over, but no word of parting was uttered. A fortnight dragged through its weary length, and hints began to show the impatience of the family; but "none are so blind as those who will not see." Then a third week began its creeping course, so, driven to desperation, the hostess had to inform the "leech" that they were all leaving home, and the house would be shut up during their absence. Thus at last they shook her off, and saw her no more. I was residing in the same parish when this episode took place.

Another curious and quaint inscription is to be seen on a house on Dinmore Hill, between Hereford and Leominster. It is illustrated by the figure of a man holding an axe, the words running thus—

"He that gives away before that he is dead,
Take this hatchet and chop off his head."

Another of these humorous mottoes, one in High Street, Rochester, is worth recording. It is an old house, standing on the original site of "Watts's Charity," and an inscription states that "by his will, dated 1579," he founded it "for six poor travellers, who, not being rogues or proctors, were to receive a night's lodging, entertainment and foupence each." Now, the dictionary tells us that our