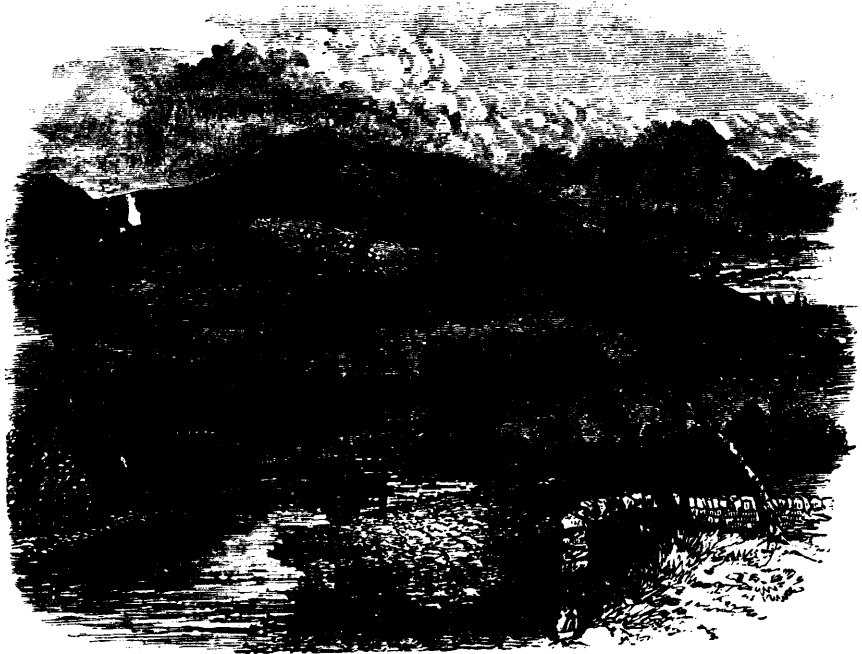


CHESTER AND THE DEE.

BY BLANCHE MURPHY.



THE DEE ABOVE BALA.

THE history of Chester is that of a key. It was the last city that gave up Harold's unlucky cause and surrendered to William the Conqueror, and the last that fell in the no less unlucky cause of the Stuart king against the Parliamentarians. In much earlier times it was held by the famous Twentieth Legion, the *Valens Victricæ*, as the key of the Roman dominion in the north-west of Britain, and at present it has peculiarities of position, as well as of architecture, which make it unique in England and a lodestone to travellers. Curiously planted on the border of the newest and most bustling manufacturing district in Eng-

land, close to the coalfields of North Wales, the mines of Lancashire, the quays of its sea-rival Liverpool and the mills of grimy, wealthy Manchester, it still exercises, besides its artistic and historic supremacy, a *bonâ fide* ecclesiastical sway over most of these new places. It is the first ancient city accessible to American travellers, many of whom have given practical tokens of their affectionate remembrance of it by largely subscribing to the fund for the restoration of the cathedral, a work that has already cost some eighty thousand pounds.

The neighbourhood of Chester is as suggestive of antiquity and foreigners