

A Tour in Wales

By E. W. Wright

WITH the devastation in Europe, where beautiful buildings have been destroyed and ancient historical places forever swept away—in fine, where whole cities have been laid waste—occupying a vivid place in our mental vision, it is perhaps only natural that we are especially thankful Great Britain has escaped a similar fate.

It is not necessary to think of the destruction of such edifices as Westminster Abbey and St. Paul's Cathedral, or the magnificent palaces and castles dotted over the country, all famous for their historical connections, for us to become seized with wrath at the idea of their wanton destruction: we only have to think how indignant we would be at the final demolition of the old ruins, many of which, without an abnormally developed organ of reverence, we would merely designate a "few bits of walls."

Yet, it is astonishing how many hamlets and villages and small towns have their show places in the form of old, battered towers and walls, which are exhibited to the visitor with much pride.

Even the country of Wales is teeming with these tangible paragraphs of ancient history. They are interspersed throughout this land, which, although it has its factories and smelting works, its quarries and coal mines, amongst the largest in the world, has a picturesqueness that is a delight to the eye and makes the country a veritable paradise for artists.

A few days' tour in Wales, either walking or cycling, is regarded by English people as one of the

most charming ways of spending a holiday.

The English city of Chester is a good starting point for such a tour. This city is of very ancient origin and is the only one in England which has its Roman walls perfect in their circuit, though its gates have all been rebuilt and alterations made at different times. The four principal streets are built, as it were, from a given centre at right angles to each other and stretch to the four gates of the city. A peculiar feature of these streets is the elevation of the pavement, which is approached by steps from the street and which is covered overhead by the projecting houses above, thus making a kind of covered archway. It gives a certain quaintness and individuality to the city, which strongly emphasizes its antiquity, and together with its old, timbered houses, presents a picturesqueness very rarely found in cities.

Travelling west, we made a detour to visit the town of Holywell. The first impression made upon us was the number of shops offering innumerable tin cans of all sizes for sale. Whilst we were wondering for what purpose they were used we saw a Roman Catholic procession proceeding solemnly along the street and almost everyone was carrying a tin can. Immediately the reason dawned upon us. These people were making a visit which was half picnic and half pilgrimage, and the tin cans were used for carrying "holy water" from St. Winifred's Well. This well is one of the wonders of Wales. The water is sent up at the rate of twenty-one tons a minute, and its