

the soil. After getting a few miles inland the country becomes more wooded, with smaller fields and high hedges. The villages are small and very rustic, the parish churches especially form most picturesque objects. Indeed an English rural landscape is essentially wanting without its appropriate church tower or spire. At length I reached Battle, a considerable market town about eight miles from Hastings, and celebrated in English history as the place where the fate of the great battle was decided between William of Normandy and King Harold, A. D. 1066. To commemorate this event, constituting a most important epoch in England's history, the Conqueror erected the year after the battle, where the action had raged the fiercest, the well known Abbey; the high altar, it is said, standing on the very spot where the dead body of Harold was found. It was dedicated to St. Martin, and filled with Benedictine Monks, from the Abbey of Marmontier in Normandy. Although portions of the Abbey have crumbled into ruins, and their foundations only can be traced, yet there are others in a good state of repair, forming a capacious family mansion, inhabited by the proprietor, Sir Godfrey Webster, Bt. Its ancient magnificence appears by the ruins of the cloisters, and in and by the largeness of the hall, kitchen, and gate house, the last being in an excellent state of preservation, and makes a very imposing appearance as you enter the Abbey from the town. The entire edifice is upwards of a mile in circumference, and the thick covering of the clustering ivy, over its ancient walls and turrets, gives it an air of solemn and impressive grandeur.

In the adjoining church of the Abbey, it is said upon reliable authority, the Conqueror offered up his sword and royal robe, which he wore on the day of his coronation. The monks kept them till their suppression, and used to shew them as great curiosities; likewise a table of the Norman gentry, who came into England with the Conqueror and shared with him the spoils. Below the Abbey, gently sloping southwards, I observed some pretty good pasture land, with some very fair specimens of Sussex cattle grazing, a hardy and useful breed. A low portion of these meadows, now forming a part of the town, still goes by the name of "the lake," formerly indeed, "bloody lake"; being almost included within the Abbey walls, the precise spot where the greatest effusion of blood took place. Further down are the extensive mills of the celebrated Lawrence gunpowder, in which a large business is still carried on. The soil in this district I consider to be generally second rate, and the farming similar; oxen are extensively employed in the ordinary work of the farm. There are but few of the improved modern breeds of cattle to be seen. In some of the neighboring parishes to the north, I observed belts of excellent soil, particularly productive in hops, a ton and upwards per acre, not being an uncommon crop. This neighborhood is still well wooded to the north, and at the time the great battle was fought, the surrounding country, into which the vanquished Britons sought a refuge from the enemy, was as dense a forest as any in Canada.

About three or four miles from Battle, is the noble seat of the Earl of Ashburnham, with its beautiful grounds and ancient church close to the mansion. In this church, it is said, were preserved in a chest, the shirt and drawers which King Charles had on when he was beheaded; likewise a watch which he gave to Mr. Ashburnham; and the sheet which was thrown over him after his execution; the touch of which was supposed to have the wonderful efficacy of curing the disease known as the King's evil. People in those days were imbued with the spirit of a large and trusting faith,—some remains of which can be traced in many of the nooks and corners of the more secluded portions of England at the present day. Among some of the farmers of the old school, there yet lingers the belief that the relative positions of the heavenly bodies,—particularly the moon,—have a decided influence on the results of farm operations, cattle, &c.

Upon the Iron or Hastings sands formation the soils are very various—passing through every gradation, from the stiffest clay to poor, and almost blowing sands. The greatest improvement ever attempted in the agriculture of this district has been of late years pretty extensively carried out, as I mentioned before, viz.: underdraining, and enlarging the fields, straightening the fences, &c. To such an extent has the removal of hedges and timber trees been carried of late on some estates, as to excite the fears of the lovers of the picturesque. Much however has yet to be done in this direction, before the full agricultural capabilities of the district can be developed; and sufficient woods, single trees, and green hedges will be left to maintain the richly varied attractions of the scenery of the Wealden.

From Battle I had a very pleasant walk through the rural parishes of Brade, Elwhurst, Bodiham and Sandhurst, in all of which the soil is very various,—passing through the different gradations from a stiff clay to a light sand,—loams, however, of good quality