

is also pointed out by village antiquaries as the veritable monument of this queen.¹ The existence of a similar tradition of the kind in two different counties, but in both instances in the neighbourhood of sir Thomas Boleyn's estates, can only be accounted for on the supposition that rumours of the murdered queen's removal from the Tower chapel were at one time in circulation among the tenants and dependants of her paternal house, and were by them orally transmitted to their descendants as matter of fact. Historical traditions are, however, seldom devoid of some kind of foundation; and whatever be their discrepancies, they frequently afford a shadowy evidence of real but unrecorded events, which, if steadily investigated, would lend a clue whereby things of great interest might be traced out. A great epic poet² of our own times has finely said,—

“Tradition! oh, tradition! thou of the seraph tongue,
The ark that links two ages, the ancient and the young.”

The execution of the viscount Rochford rendered his two sisters the co-heiresses of their father, the earl of Wiltshire. The attainder of Anne Boleyn, together with Cranmer's sentence on the nullity of her marriage with the king, had, by the law of the land, deprived her and her issue of any claim on the inheritance of her father. Yet, on the death of the earl of Wiltshire, king Henry, in defiance of his own acts, did, with equal rapacity and injustice, seize Hever-castle and other portions of the Boleyn patrimony in right of his divorced and murdered wife Anne, the elder daughter, reserving for her

¹ I am indebted to my amiable and highly-gifted friend, lady Petre, for this information, and also for the following description of the monument, which is within a narrow window-seat:—The black marble or touchstone that covers it, rises about a foot between the seat and the window, and is of a rough description: it has rather the appearance of a shrine that has been broken open. It may have contained her head or her heart, for it is too short to contain a body, and indeed seems to be of more ancient date than the sixteenth century. The oldest people in the neighbourhood all declare that they have heard the tradition in their youth, from a previous generation of aged persons, who all affirmed it to be Anne Boleyn's monument. Horndon-on-the-Hill is about a mile from Thorndon-hall, the splendid mansion of lord Petre, and sixteen miles from Newhall, once the seat of sir Thomas Boleyn, and afterwards a favourite country palace of Henry VIII., who tried to change its name to Beaulieu; but the force of custom was too strong even for the royal will in that neighbourhood, and Beaulieu is forgotten in the original name.

² Adam Mickiewicz.