An Essay towards ascertaining the Etymology of the Names of Places in the County of Northumberland, by the REV. ANTHONY HEDLEY, M. A.

"Much curious matter in philology might be gleaned from well selected lists of vulgar words—and the names of farm-houses, glens, brooks, and especially of fields."
Introductory Address, by the Rev. John Hodgson, on the Study of Antiquities.

IT has been a long established custom with county historians to attempt to etymologise the names of places which form the subject of their descriptions. Their unfounded and often ridiculous derivations have very much tended to justify the contempt into which topographical etymology is so generally sunk, and against which there are so many prejudices, as a vain and fanciful study—to be ranked only among the "*deliramenta doctrinæ.*" But connected as local etymology is with the rise, progress, and gradual decay of languages, it must surely, on this ground alone, be interesting to every scholar. Besides, it often affords curious and instructive notices with respect to the colonization of countries, which are no where else to be found.—The barrow may be removed—the stone monument may be dashed in pieces by some modern Goth—the intrenchment may be worn out by the plough—but a local name is often nearly as imperishable as the mountain or the river of which it is the designation. It is by means of these curious and precious fragments of the long-lost languages of other times, that the "pedigree of nations" may be best traced; and

it was by weapons from this armoury, that the indefatigable Chalmers defeated in kerton and the Goths, on the much contested point respecting the lineage of the Picts.

Ought then a subject, which, if discreetly pursued, is at once so interesting to the Philologist, and so useful to the Historical Antiquary, to be so lightly esteemed? The topography of few countries affords so fine an opportunity for this kind of research as our own. Its aboriginal inhabitants, the Britons, possessed a very descriptive language, and many of the names which they imposed upon mountains, rivers, and the other great features of nature yet remain, having triumphed over the numberless revolutions of all kinds to which our country has been since exposed. Their simple but finely discriminating terms, generally painting as it were, some local circumstance, put to utter shame the whimsical, absurd, and altogether barbarous local nomenclature of modern colonizers and navigators; and their superior good taste and ingenuity in this respect, argue a much higher degree of civilization and refinement than is usually ascribed to them. Many names of places throughout Northumberland still attest the abode and the language of this first people; and this circumstance, added to the numerous remains of their cairns, and camps, and stone circles, scattered through most parts of the county, where cultivation has not interfered with them, sufficiently proves it to have been thickly settled in their time. The following Celtic terms enter into the composition, and form the elements as it were, of many names of places in Northumberland:—

Pil, a moated fort, appears in the form of *Peel.* Within my own recollection almost every *old* house in the dales of Rede and Tyne was what is called a *Peel* house, built for securing its inhabitants and their cattle in the moss trooping times.

Cairn, a heap of loose stones.

Crag, a rock.

Uch, a height, in the form of Heugh, with the Saxon aspirate *h.*

Bre or *Brae*, applied to declivities.
Lyn, a pool.
Caer, a mound thrown up for defence, in a few places.
Glen, a valley, in *Glendale* and *Glenwhelt*.
Dun or *Don*, a hill, the Scoto-Irish or Gaelic form of the British *Din*.
Parc, an inclosure.
Ros, a promontory.
Tre, a dwelling.

After the Britons came four successive hordes of conquerors, with each their own language, and each exercising the privilege of conquerors, by giving new names, or by adding to, translating into their own speech, and otherwise changing the old ones. The Romans were undoubtedly the first who came in upon the original settlers. The Ottadini* territory was probably not subdued till after the return of Agricola, from his campaigns beyond the Firth of Forth, in A. D. 84. Considering their long stay, and their unlimited dominion from the wall of Antonine southward, the Romans appear to have been the most moderate in the exercise of the privilege above-mentioned. They seem, for the most part, to have been content with the names they found in use, merely latinising the terminations of a few of them; for if we may take Baxter for our guide, almost all the names of Roman cities in Britain may be traced to British roots. Notwithstanding their long continued residence in Northumberland, and where they have left us one of the most splendid monuments of their enterprize and power, I do not recollect throughout the whole of the county, the single name of a place that can, with any propriety, be traced to their language†.

* Caledonia, vol. ii. p. 206.

† It is probable, indeed, that the Latin language was very little spoken by the Roman soldiers in Britain. Paul was a Roman, but born at Tarsus. Colonies of *Italians* settled in the fine climates of France and Spain, where they introduced the use of the Latin tongue; but Rome held Britain, not by Italian colonists, but by mercenary soldiers, drawn from different and distant parts of the empire.

The Romanized Britons, to whose help against the invading Picts and Scots, the Saxons had been called, soon found in that fierce and warlike people masters instead of allies. Their first visit to the island was A. D. 449; but they were long employed chiefly in its southern provinces, and the downfall of Ottadinian independence did not finally take place till the establishment of the Northumbrian kingdom by Ida, in A. D. 547. If we did not know from history, we might from topography, that the Saxons had the most lasting, general, and deep-rooted possession of the island; for throughout the whole of England and the south of Scotland, there are probably ten names of places of Saxon origin, for two or three derived from any other language. In the topography of Northumberland, most of the following Saxon terms are in frequent use, both singly and in composition :—

Botle, a place of abode, in one or two instances.

Burgh, *Brough*, or *Burg*, originally a fortified place.

Burn, applied to small rivulets.

Car, a pool or lake, in Prestwic-car.

Chesters, the *Ceaster* of the Saxons, and applied by them to the *Castra* of the Romans, as well as the *Caers*, or forts, of the Britons.

Cleugh, a ravine.

Comb, a valley between two hills.

Cop or *Cap*, the top of a hill.

Dale, in composition *Dal*, a valley.

Dike, a wall.

Dean, a wooded valley.

Fen, a marsh.

Ham, a dwelling,

Here, in composition *har*, an army.

Hirst or *Hurst*, a small wood.

How or *Hoe*, a hill.

Holm, a water meadow, also a hill.

Ing, a meadow.

Kirk, a church.

Law, a hill.

Lee or *Ley*, a pasture.

Rig, a ridge.

Raw, a row.

Shaw, a copse wood.

Shank, the projecting point of a hill.

Shiel, originally a temporary hut for shepherds, afterwards applied to fixed habitations.

Sike, a small rill.

Steel or *Steal*, locus, a place.

Stead, a farm house and offices.

Thorn, often used, I think, in Northumberland, as a corruption of *Thurn*, an old word, according to Ortelius, signifying a tower.

Throp, a village.

Ton, a place of abode.

Wark or *Werk*, a building.

Wick, according to Bp. Gibson, has a threefold signification; 1, a village; 2, the curving reach of a river, or bay; 3, a castle.

Worth, a court, farm, or place of abode, in Wark*worth*.

The Danes, who long ruled over the north of England as absolute conquerors, have left us many memorials of their invasion in the topography of the country: their *fell*, more especially, enters into the composition of many names in the northern counties, and has been very generally imposed on the moorland districts.

From the entrance of the Danes into Britain to the coming of the Normans, in 1066, there elapsed a period of 274 years. It was the policy of the Conqueror to change the language and the institutions of the kingdom; and yet it is astonishing how extensively and obstinately the ancient names of places have been retained. There are, at least in Northumberland, few traces of Norman local names though

Belshawe, now Belsay, Beaufront, and one or two others may be given as examples. *Hope*, a mountain dingle or valley, a word, according to Chalmers, introduced after the Norman conquest, enters very extensively into the names of places in all the upland districts, more especially in the north of England and south of Scotland. The Normans likewise softened the pronunciation of many of the local names, by inserting and changing letters, as *Charlton* for the Saxon *Carlton*, by the insertion of *h*.

In searching for the etymons of local names, two things are necessary to be observed :—

1. We should always, if possible, personally visit the spot in question, that we may have an opportunity of observing its natural features. The older the name is, the more likely is it to be expressive of some local circumstance, for it may almost be laid down as an axiom, that all ancient names of places, however unmeaning many of them may now appear, are significant in the language of the people who imposed them. 2. We should endeavour to find out how the word was *anciently spelt and written.* Without this precaution, our labour must often be in vain, and we shall be in continual hazard of justly incurring the ridicule so generally cast upon the local etymologist. Many names of places, transmitted through successive generations of people ignorant of the language of those who bestowed them, have at length become so disguised and corrupted, that scarcely any of their original elements remain. For the greater part of England, Doomsday Book is a great help in this respect; though there is little doubt that many of the Saxon names, both of places and persons, are sadly corrupted through the ignorance and carelessness of the Norman scribes. As Northumberland and some of the northern counties are not included in this curious and invaluable record, we must have recourse, wherever we can, to old charters, and, in default of these, to the Testa de Nevil, the Inquisitiones post Mortem, and the other parliamentary printed records, several of which, so far as they relate to Northumberland, are

contained in the published volume of Mr. Hodgson's History of the county. The laborious and well-executed index to this elegant volume, is one of the most useful ever appended to any book. It is in particular a most valuable present to the topographical etymologist.

These hasty and desultory observations I have been induced to offer with much diffidence, as prefatory to a few specimens of an attempt to etymologize the more remarkable names of places in my native county. Should they be found acceptable to the Society, the subject may be further pursued at some future meeting. In the mean time, as to the derivations about to be presented to their notice, I conclude, in the often quoted words of the great Roman Classic,

——— si quid novisti rectius istis;
Candidus imperti: si non—his utere mecum.

PARISH OF KIRKWHELPINGTON.

WANNIE CRAG, a high and steep hill, forming the western extremity of this parish, on the summit of which there has been a British strength, impregnable to the north from a precipitous rock of a stupendous height, and flanked on the accessible sides by a semicircular breastwork of stone, from whence the declivity is very swift. The encampment has occupied the whole of the flat summit. The account given by Tacitus of the mode in which the British constructed their forts, is a most accurate description of the place in question. "Tunc montibus arduis et si qua clementer accedi poterant in modum valli saxa præstruit."* As this was probably one of the strengths of the Ottadini people in the days of their conflict with the Roman power, we may look for the origin of its name in the aboriginal language. In the Irish, which is a sister dialect of the British, *uaine* or *waine* is green. And in the parish of Kirkmabrak,† in Wigtonshire, there is

* Tac. Ann. lib. 12, sec. 33. † Stat. Acc. xv. 552.

a barrow which is called Cairney *Wannie*, and which the writer of its statistical account says is merely the cairn *waine* of the Irish, and means the green cairn. *Wannie* crag must then be the green crag. *Crag*, though still used in the common speech of this country, is a pure British word, signifying a rock, or rocky height.

WANSBECK, the river which flows past Morpeth, and enters the sea at Cambois, takes its rise from the back of Wannie, and is, I have no doubt, a contraction of *Wannies-beck*. *Beck*, which, in Cumberland and Westmoreland, is the generic term for a brook or rivulet, appears nowhere else, so far as I recollect, in the topography of Northumberland.

CATCHERSIDE.—Before the formation of a turnpike road across Harwood, the principal road from Scotland to this quarter of Northumberland led past this place, which was noted for the resort and nightly accommodation of packmen and *cadgers*, who, before the union, were the chief agents in carrying on the commercial intercourse between the two kingdoms.* Hence, *perhaps*, the two first syllables of its name, though I beg to pronounce upon this with considerable doubt. *Cadger*, according to Jameson, is the modern orthography of *cacher*, from the old Scotch word *cache*, signifying to *drive*, and, in a neuter sense, to *carry;* and *catcher* is no great corruption of *cacher*. The affix *side* is the terminating syllable of many other names of places in this county, and has usually been understood to denote their locality on the *side* of a hill. They have not all of them, however, this position; and it is very questionable whether any of them ought to be referred to this etymon, but rather to the Celtic *saide*,† a seat, an abode, a dwelling-place.

* From this place they directed their course southward, across Shaftoe Crag, through a remarkable fissure in the freestone rock, still called the *Sauter's nick;* from whence we may learn that *salt* (provincially *saut* or *sote*) was one of the great objects of their traffic.

† Hence, perhaps, the Latin *sedes*, which is a much more likely etymon than the Greek ἕδος assigned to it by Baxter. It may perhaps be asked, why not derive the Celtic *saide* from the Latin *sedes*. I answer, because *saide* is the Irish form of the word, and the

LADY WELL, so called from a fine spring near it; and which, in popish times, was probably dedicated to " our Lady".

REGISTER, perhaps a corruption of *Rae-Chester*, a farm, forming part of what was once called Whelpington Fell. Here are very perfect remains of a square camp of considerable dimensions, which probably gives name to the place. Rae-chester is a compound of the British *rae*, or the Gaelic *ra*, signifying a fortified place, a fort, and the Saxon *ceaster* or *chester*, of a similar meaning. The British prefix to this name is a presumption that this encampment existed in British times; and is, therefore, from its *square* form most probably of Roman origin. Rutchester, near Newcastle, the ancient Vindobala; Riechester in Redewater, the Roman Bremenium; and Rochester, near Chipchase Castle; where, to aid the name, are strong and evident lines of a large Roman camp, and which has hitherto most unaccountably escaped the notice of all our antiquaries—are all formed of the same pleonastic compound,—the British *rae* or *ra*, a fort, and the Saxon *ceaster* or *chester*, signifying the same thing.

THE HEALD. This name is given to the quickly-sloping ground on the east side of the Ray burn, a few hundred yards before it joins the Wansbeck, near Kirkwhelpington. It is a pure Saxon word, signifying shelving,* declining, or hanging downwards, which is very descriptive of the ground in question.

Romans having had no connection with Ireland, its natives had no opportunity of borrowing any part of its language from them. Besides, according to the rules laid down by Lhuyd and other etymologists, in any contested derivation, the monosyllabic claimant is generally the true root. Without deciding dogmatically on the subject, it is clear the Celtic and Latin languages must, in their origin, be nearly allied; and that the latter at least cannot be the parent of the former. For instance, the Celtic terms *tîr*, *awyr*, *mor*, and *llwch*, obviously agreeing, both in sound and signification with the Latin *terra*, *aer*, *mare*, *lucus*, designate common objects for which the Britons must have had names long before the arrival of Cæsar and his legions; and which were probably used, both in Britain and Ireland, long before the Romans even knew of the existence of such places.

* Heald, *devexus*,—Benson, *in voce*.

SLEDEHOE, a considerable eminence about half way between Horns Castle and Corn Hills. This likewise is a very descriptive Saxon appellation from *slede*, a valley, and *hou* or *hoe*, a hill, meaning *the hill in the valley*; the place in question being actually a detached eminence, unconnected with any mountainous range, and rising abruptly from the surrounding level space or valley.

PARISH OF ELSDON.

ELSDON, a village of great antiquity, which gives name to this very extensive parish, is said to have been a Roman town in the time of M. Aurelius Antoninus, two Roman altars having been found inscribed to that Emperor, in a hill called the Mote Hill, at a little distance N. E. from the town. Urns, and the remains of sacrificed animals, have likewise been found here. It is supposed by General Roy to have been the first of a chain of forts between Watling-street and its eastern branch, called the Devil's Causeway; the second having been on the Coquet, behind Hepple, on a hill now called Hetchester. From its name, however, it is evident that the Mote Hill (which I believe to be the most perfect and remarkable earth work with this appellation, to be found in Northumberland) was afterwards in the occupation of the Saxons. Hence, probably, its name *Els*-don, from the Anglo-Saxon *elde*, old, and *dun* or *don*, a hill, or fort upon a hill; referring to its ancient occupation by the Romans. *Els*-bury, in Scotland, is translated by Baxter,* *antiqua arx*. It may, however, have been the *dun* or fort of *Ella*, a common name among the Saxons.

GARRETSHEELS, in Redewater, a corruption of *Gerard*-sheels, or the sheelings belonging to a person of the name of *Gerard*. In the 10th of Edward 1st, *Gerardsheels* is claimed by Gilbert de Umfreville, as part of his possessions in Redesdale. The surname *Garrett* is, I have no doubt, a corruption of Gerard.

OTTERCOPS, a farm occupying high ground, and forming the

* Sub voce *Cindocellum*.

southern extremity of this parish. In old records it is uniformly written *Altirtopps** or *Altircops*, which gives us a name, formed probably by different people, and in different æras. The two first syllables are purely British, from *allt*, a cliff, a height, or hill, and *tir*, land, country. *Altir* is, therefore, literally, the high or hill country, which is perfectly descriptive of its situation. The Saxons, however, seldom permitted a British name to remain quite in its original state, and had a strong fancy of adding to it, and that often pleonastically. In this instance they added their *coppe*, which signifies the top of a hill, thus making the whole name, *Altir-copps*, or the *hill country tops*.

ELISHAW. As the most probable etymon of Ely, in Cambridgeshire, Bp. Gibson, in his appendix to the Saxon Chronicle, gives us the British *helig*, or *elig*, willows, because that marshy region formerly abounded in them. About the time of the Norman Conquest, or soon after, the *g* was often melted into *y* or *i*,† and the aspirate was frequently dropped. Hence *helig* would, by these mutations, be *ely* or *eli*, which affords a likely enough derivation of *Eli*-shaw, *i. e.* the *willow wood*. It is a remarkable confirmation of this etymology, that there are yet growing here a few of the largest *willow* trees to be met with, perhaps, in the north of England.

GERSONS-FIELD, near Otterburn. The prefix to this name is nothing but the Saxon *gaers*, grass. There are Gerstons in Surry and Sussex, which Lye derives from this etymon. The provincial pronunciation of grass in Northumberland, is still the pure Saxon *girs*, or *gaers*.

OVERACRES, a farm, about two miles west from Elsdon, from the Anglo-Saxon *ofer*, upper, and *acer* or *aker*, a field. Now, this word is used for a certain space or measure of ground, but not formerly. Overacres is, therefore, Saxon for the upper-fields.

* Henry III. 52, Altirtoppes forfeited by Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, and given by the king to his son Edmund.—The king complains that it is kept wrongfully by Gilbert de Umfreville.

† In fine vocum *g* apud posteriores Anglos sæpe in *y* or *i* liquescit.—*Vid. Lye sub lit. g.*

RATTENROW, in Redewater; and RATTENRAW, near Haydon-bridge. There are, I believe, some other places of the same name in the county. The historian of the parish of Halifax, in considering the etymology of a place there of a similar appellation, seems to give way to the opinion of Stukeley, who, in his account of Richard of Cirencester, says* this name is of high antiquity, and relates to *panegyres* or *fairs*. And a writer in the Archaeologia,† observes, *Rattenraw* is a name of great antiquity, which the learned Camden deduces from the German freebooters, or hireling auxiliaries: "*rotten*, or *rotteren*, to muster," says he; "hence *rot maister*, a corporal". Neither appearance, tradition, nor history encourages us, however, to assign any extraordinary antiquity to places of this denomination in this county; and I would derive them from *raw*, row, a rank, derived from the Anglo-Saxon *raewa*, a series, and *ton* or *tun*, signifying the houses in a *row*. *Row* has afterwards been pleonastically added.

SILLS-BURN, a rivulet so named, probably, from the *strata* through which it runs—provincially termed *sills*, appearing bare in various parts of its course, to a considerable depth.

RUKEN-EDGE, a lofty ridge lying between Emblehope burn and Redewater, evidently from the German *Rucken*, dorsum, the back, and metaphorically, a promontory or ridge.

DURTREE-BURN, is vulgarly written *Dultree*; but both in Speed's map and in the index to the published volume of Mr. Hodgson's History, it is spelt *Durtre*, which is probably its true orthography. If so, it is a pure Celtic compound, from *dur*, water; and *tre*, a dwelling; signifying the dwelling at the water. The whole of the name *Durtre*, was in time imposed upon what was at first only the *dur*, or rivulet; and the Saxon *burn*, was added by a subsequent people.

REDE-SWIRE, that part of the mountainous range between England and Scotland, from whence the river Rede derives its principal source. It is from the Anglo-Saxon *swire*, signifying primarily, a *neck*; and in

* P. 44. † Vol. x. 61.

a secondary and metaphorical sense, used to denote the hollow or depression of a mountain, connecting higher mountains or hills on each side of it. Thus the Rede-swire is the lower and connecting ridge between the Carter-fell on the west, and the Hound-law on the east. This was the scene of a famous border contest, 7th June, 1575, called the Raid of the Rede-swire.

CARTER-FELL, the dividing ridge between England and Scotland, from whence issues the river Rede. "On voit," says Bullet,* "par *card, ard*, que *cart*, a signifié pointe, aiguillon." The Celtic *cart*, with the same meaning as *ard*, (which, according to the same writer signifies what is—"le plus elevé—montagne dans la même langue"), is most likely the root of *Carter*. In the south-west of Scotland, there is a hill called *Carthur*, but the village at the foot of it is *Carter*-ton. Near the southern extremity of the parish of Simonburn, we have the Green-*Carts*, and the Black-*Carts*, signifying, respectively, the green heights or hills, and the black or heathy hills. And a little to the south-east of Cheviot is a hill called the

CAIRD, or CARD-LAW, which, I have no doubt, is synonymous with *Cart*, *t* and *d* being convertible letters. *Law* has been afterwards added by a people who knew not that *card* already signified a *hill*.

GAMMELS-PATH, the name of that portion of the old Roman road between Rochester (Bremenium) and Chew-Green (Ad Fines), just before it reaches the latter place; meaning the *old road*, from the Danish *gammel*, old.

RIDING. There are no fewer than seven places of this name in this county. In searching for its etymon, the Yorkshire Ridings naturally present themselves; but *Riding* there is a corruption of *Thridding*, signifying the third part, i. e. of the county, and can have no relation to the Northumberland Ridings. Indeed, I gave up the word in despair, till I read Professor Magnuson's Dissertation† upon the Runic inscription upon the gold ring found near Carlisle, which throws considerable

* Sur la Langue Celtique, sub voce *Cart*.

† Vide p. 136 of this volume.

light upon it. The inscription he thus translates,—" This ring belongs to Earl Orme the trusty, of *Ridong*." And upon *Ridong* the Professor observes—" I, therefore, read *Ridong*, *Redong*, or *Readong*, the same as *Reading* or *Reding** (yet in use), or *Vidang*, signifying *campus sylvestris*. We know that the Northmen, occupying Normandy, imposed new names, derived from their own language, upon the places of that country. And that the same thing was done by the first Danes who subdued parts of England, is not at all improbable."

Professor Magnuson thinks it not unlikely, as Northumberland and Cumberland are conterminous counties, that the ring in question belonged to Orme, Earl of Northumberland and Deira, who flourished about the years 941 and 942. This Danish chief probably lived at one of our Northumberland Ridings; a word, it would seem, of Scandinavian origin, still used as a local name in Denmark or Norway; and which signifies, in English, a woody, uncultivated field or pasture, or whatever else may be thought a better translation of " *campus sylvestris*."

PARISH OF EGLINGHAM.

EGLINGHAM, a village with a church, which gives name to a very extensive parish. Its prefix is evidently the British *eglys*, a church.

BREAMISH, in Speed's Map *Bremyshe*, perhaps to be derived from *breme*, an old word, according to Jamieson, signifying furious, raging, swelling, and *uishg* or *uisge*, a Gaelic term for water. It is some confirmation of this etymology, that as soon as this rivulet loses its mountainous character, about Bewick Bridge, and pursues a more gentle course, it drops this name, and takes that of the

TILL, which, according to Bullet, means a valley. Nothing is more

* In a Danish translation of this interesting paper, of which two or three copies have found their way to this country, the Author adds here " or *Riding*," which is, to a letter, the very local name we are considering.

common than for a river to take the name of the valley through which it flows. *Tille* is a river in Burgundy.

POW-BURN; an evident corruption of the Celtic *pwl* or *poll*, a ditch, a pool, from which comes the Anglo-Saxon *pul*.

LILLBURN, a small rivulet, which gives its name to a village and township, and falls into the Breamish; from the Danish *lille*, little, and *burn*. *Lile* is still used for *little* in Cumberland and Westmoreland. We find *Lille-sund*, in Norway.

BEWICK, a village overhanging the eastern bank of the Till, in a fine, open situation, with a most extensive and delightful prospect.—This is one of the few Norman appellations in the county; imposed, probably, by the Monks of St. Albans, who, with the church of Eglingham, had very early possession of the township and other lands in the same parish. It is compounded of *beau*, fine, pretty, and the Saxon *wick*, in allusion to its happily chosen site.

The CATERANES' HOLE, on Bewick Moor, a natural cave, formed by a narrow fissure in the freestone rock, and descending towards the west, to a very great depth, at an angle of about 15° degrees. By this instructive name we learn, that this cave has probably been, in former times, the hidden retreat of *Cateranes*, an old Scotch word, signifying "bands of robbers," which Jamieson derives from the Irish *ceatharnach*, a soldier.

HIGH HEDGLEY, antiently written *Higley*, and *Higgley*, from the Anglo-Saxon *hig*, high, and *ley*, pasture. *High* has been prefixed, pleonastically, in more modern times. *Hedghope*, a mountain immediately south-east of Cheviot, and almost rivalling it in height, affords an instance of a similar corruption of the Saxon *hig*; for I have no doubt that it means the *High-hope*.

BEANLEY, an adjoining township, and part of it on still higher ground than Hedgley. In old records it is generally spelt *Ben-ley*, composed, probably, of the Gaelic *ben* or *bein*, a hill or mountain, and *ley*, pasture. On the summit of the highest ground in this township, in what

is called Beanley plantation, are the interesting remains of a British camp, with a double foss and rampart. The road leading from it is still very perfect, winding down the northern declivity of the hill, and guarded with large stones placed edgeways.

GALLOW-LAW, on the Beanley estate, but on the northern side of the Breamish. Here must have been the place of execution for the Barony of Beanley, before the *jus furcæ* was taken from the lords.

CRAWLEY TOWER, standing near the southern extremity of an old encampment, which Mr. Smart, in the preceding article of this volume, rightly supposes to be Roman. The north-west angle, which is the most perfect part of it, is decidedly Roman in its features, and cannot be mistaken. That it was the *Alauna amnis* of Richard of Cirencester, is by no means so certain Mr. Smart says, he is "confirmed in this idea, because the eminence on which it stands, declines down both to the rivers Aln and Breamish." Now it certainly has a fine command of the latter river, being not more than half a mile from it; but the considerable hill on which the village of Glanton is situated, lies between it and the river Aln, from which it is distant not less than three miles. Had it received its appellation, therefore, from either of these rivers, is it not much more likely that it would have been named with reference to the Breamish than the Aln?

I think it probable that *Crawley*, or, as it is anciently spelt, *Crawlawe*, is a corruption of *Caer-law*, i. e. the fort upon the hill. *Caer Almond*, the Roman naval station at the mouth of the river Almond, on the Firth of Forth, is, we know, contracted, in a similar way, into *Cramond*.

BASSINTON, on the northern brink of the Aln, from *bassin*,* an old word, which signifies rushy, and *ton*. The surrounding fields, notwithstanding the progress of cultivation, still very much abound in the common rush (*juveus effusus*). This word appears in *bass*, a mat for cleaning the feet, and *bass*-bottomed chairs. There is another

* Jam. sub voce.

Bassinton in the chapelry of Cramlington, which has, probably, the same etymon.

The following additional Examples are taken indiscriminately from different parts of the County.

THORNGRAFTON, from the Anglo-Saxon *Thyrn*, thorn; *graef*, a grove; and *ton*; i. e. literally, Thorn-grove-town.

MELCRIDGE, a corruption, *per metathesin*, of *Mickle-ridge*, from the Anglo-Saxon *mickle*, large.

BOTHAL, the name of an ancient castle and village on the river Wansbeck, which gives name to the parish; obviously from the Anglo-Saxon *botl* or *botle*. It is, in fact, vulgarly pronounced *Bottle*.

WOODHORN, i. e. the *wood-corner*, from the Anglo-Saxon *horn*, a corner; having, probably, been the south-east corner of the wood which formerly overspread this coast, however now denuded of it, as we learn from many etymological intimations in the neighbourhood; e. g. *Wid* or *Wood*rington; *Hirst; Longhurst; Norwood*, i. e. *Northwood; Stobswood*, from the Anglo-Saxon *stub* or *stobbe*, the stump of a tree; *Northhurst; Woodhouse; Woodhouses*, &c.

HEPPLE, a village on the north bank of the Coquet; in old records, *Heppale, Heppal, Heple*, and *Heepeel*. It is, probably, a corruption of *hea-peel*, from the Saxon *hea*, high, and *peel*, a border strength, from the British *pil*. "About the middle of the last century," says the writer of M'Kenzie and Dent's History of Northumberland, "this town consisted of 15 detached farmsteads, besides several strong ancient houses;" and afterwards adds, "at that time the exterior walls of a strong and stately house were still standing tolerably entire, and which had probably been the manor house of the proprietors of Hepple." To this last-mentioned building, the appropriate appellation of *Hea-peel* was probably applied, to distinguish it from the neighbouring *peels* of inferior strength; and from hence the village might

derive its name. *Hepple,* it may be added, is a Northumbrian local surname.

HARNHAM, in the parish of Bolam, occupying a very singular and picturesque situation. "Seen before a setting sun," says Mr. Hodgson, in his article Northumberland, in the Beauties of England, "it appears like one of the fine towered hills in the pictures of Nicholas Poussin." It is derived by Wallis from "*harn* or *hern,* as a contraction of the Roman *hermen,* from *Hermes,* the god of travellers and custos manium of highways; and of the Saxon *herman* or *hareman,* a *military road.*" Thus far Wallis, whose etymology in this article is singularly confused and inaccurate; for Harnham cannot be derived both from the Roman, or rather the Greek *Hermes,* and the Saxon *hereman,* which are words that have not the slightest mutual relation. Besides, *hereman* is not Saxon for a *military road,* but for *miles,* a *soldier;* and it may be remarked further, that the place in question lies at the distance of nearly two miles from the Devil's Causeway—the military road referred to by Wallis, and therefore not at all likely to derive its name from it. It is, I am persuaded, to be derived from the Anglo-Saxon *horn,* a corner, and *ham,* a house or habitation. Nothing can be well more descriptive of its singular situation than this etymology, which will sufficiently appear, from Wallis's own account of the place. "It stands," says he, "on an eminence, and has been a place of great strength and security, a range of perpendicular rocks of rag stone on one side, and a morass on the other; the entrance by a narrow declivity to the north, which, in the memory of some persons now living, had an iron gate. The manor house is on the south-west *corner* of the precipice." It is indeed, literally, a *horn-ham* or *corner house,* which, by the change of a single letter, has been converted into *Harnham.*

CAMBOIS, a village situated on a small creek or haven, at the mouth of the river Wansbeck. We have here one instance, among numberless others, that the vulgar pronunciation of many names is often the best guide to their true orthography. *Cambois* is commonly

pronounced *Camus*, and is doubtless the Gaelic *camus*, a creek or bay.

THROPTON, on the Coquet, a pleonasm, formed of the Anglo-Saxon *throp*, a village, and *ton*, of the like import.

THROPPLE, near Mitford, compounded of *throp*, a village, and *hill*; meaning the village on the hill.

KENTON, a village on a commanding eminence near Newcastle, from *ken*, view, and *ton*; literally, view or prospect town.

MICKLEY, the extensive pasture, from the Anglo-Saxon *mucel* or *mickle*, large, and *ley*, pasture.

AIRDLEY, in Hexhamshire, occupying a high situation. *Aird*, in the British, is *height*; to which the Saxons added their *ley*, pasture. *Airdley* means, therefore, the high pasture. *Aird* is often corrupted into *Ord*, which is a local surname.

MOLLER-STEAD, near Hexham chapel, from the Danish *moller*, a *miller*, and *sted*, a place; i. e. the miller's house or place.

WELDON, on the Coquet, has its first syllable from the Anglo-Saxon *weald*, a wood; the affix, *don*, is the Anglo-Saxon *den*, a valley.

DUNTERLEE, near Bellingham. *Dunter* is purely British, from *Dun*, a hill, and *tir*, land or country. *Lee* or *Ley*, pasture, has been subsequently added. The whole means the hill land pasture.

PONTELAND, from the Anglo-Saxon *ea-land*, compounded of *ea*, water, and *land*; i. e. the water land of the river Pont. *Eland* is the name of an adjoining mansion. A similarity in sound long confounded some of our earlier Antiquaries, and led them to place *Pons Ælii* here, instead of Newcastle.

INGOE, anciently written *Inghou*, from the Anglo-Saxon *ing*, a meadow, and *hoe*, a hill.

SHAFTO-CRAG, a lofty and picturesque-looking eminence, forming the southern extremity of the parish of Hartburn; in old records, always spelt *Schafthow*, and probably compounded of the German *schaf*, a sheep, and the Anglo-Saxon *hoe*, a hill. This place gives a local

surname to a very ancient family, the chief branch of which has been long seated at Bavington, in this county.

WATCH-CURRACK, on the hill south-west of Hexham, where there has been a beacon to alarm the country on the approach of an enemy. *Currack* is a slight corruption of the Gaelic *cruach*, a heap, a cairn; and the prefix, *watch*, denotes the purpose for which it was used.

MINDRUM, on the Beaumont-water, anciently written *Myndrom*, and a name of Celtic origin, compounded of the British *mynn*, a kid, and the Gaelic *drum*, signifying the back ridge of a hill. *Mindrum* is, therefore, Kid-hill, and synonymous with

KIDLAW, the name of a farm, in the parish of Kirkharle.

KYLOE, in Camden's Britannia spelt *Killey*, and in the Mag. Britannia, *Killy* or *Killey*, obviously a corruption of the British *Celli* or *Kelli*, a grove or thicket of trees; more strictly, according to Camden,* "a wood where much hazel grows." Fenwick wood, the remains of a natural forest, still comes almost close to Kyloe, on the south.

KELLY-BURN, in Redesdale, must be referred to the same etymon, and is the same in meaning as *Wood-burn*.

PENPUGH. This interesting name is marked in Speed's map, and in Armstrong's; but I am sorry to find it omitted in Fryer's. It is purely British, from *pen*, head,—figuratively, the summit; and *pou*,† region or country. *Penpugh*, which lies on the height south of Wylly-moteswick, and nearly on the *water shed* between the South Tyne and the Allen, signifies, therefore, the country about the hill summits.

CARVORAN, (the *Magna* of the Romans) a slight corruption of *Caer-vorwyn*, which, in British, signifies the Maiden Castle or Fort, so named from the Maiden Way passing through it.

BRISLEY, on the margin of the Aln, almost opposite Huln Abbey, a corruption of *Braes-ley*, i. e. the pasture of the *braes* or banks, by which it is environed on the south, and on the summit of which stands

* Gibson's Camden, vol. ii. p. 785. † Vid. Lhuyd, sub voce *Regio*.

Brisley Tower, so fine and conspicuous an object in the neighbourhood of Alnwick.

BOLHAM, an ancient village, which gives name to a parish, is of the same import as *Bolton*, and a pleonastic compound of the Scandinavian *bol*, a habitation, and the Anglo-Saxon *ham*.

DRURIDGE, in old writings, is always spelt *Dryrigg*, of very obvious derivation.

KERSHOPE, a mountain stream, having its source in Northumberland, but flowing into the Liddal, and the boundary between England and Scotland, throughout its course of eight miles. On the Scottish side of this rivulet, there is a hill called *Car*by, in some maps spelt *Kir*by, upon which, within my own recollection, were the striking remains of a British fort, remarkable for the strength and peculiarity of its construction. The British *Caer*, a fortress, gives no doubt its significant name to *Car*by, and the adjoining *hope* or valley, would be called the *Caers*-hope or *Kers**-hope, which name has been subsequently transferred to the rivulet which flows through it. *Kers*hope, near St. Peter's, in Allendale; *Kears*ley, in the chapelry of Ryal; *Cars*ley, in Armstrong's map spelt Caesley, near Black *Chester*, a little way south of Alnham; and *Kers*ay cleugh, at the head of North Tyne, near an old British fort and settlement called *Bels-hunkings*, are all names indebted for their prefixes to a similar origin. *Kershope*, it may be added, is a local surname in the form of *Kirsop*. The British *Caer* likewise furnishes local surnames to the families of *Car*, *Carr*, *Ker*, and *Keir*.

* *Chester*-hope, in Rede-water, obtains its name from the Roman station, Habitancum, now Risingham, which lies at the bottom of the hope or valley; and is, in fact, synonymous with *Kers*-hope.