

## X.—A MEMOIR OF HOWARD PEASE.

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Although, with characteristic self-effacement, he took but little active part in the proceedings of our society, the death of Howard Pease has removed from us a sincere friend who was a devout lover of Northumberland. The eldest son of the late John William Pease of Pendower, Newcastle upon Tyne, and Helen Maria, fourth daughter of Alfred Fox of Falmouth, he inherited from both his parents high traditions of public service and intellectual culture. Born at Saltwell, county Durham, on 12th July, 1863, he entered Clifton college in September, 1878. For three out of the four years which he spent there, his house-master was that accomplished scholar and inspiring teacher, Henry George Dakyns; and those who gratefully recognize what they owe to Clifton and its wise training are able to trace in his character the best influences of the school in which he was a younger contemporary of Douglas Haig and Henry Newbolt. He left Clifton, where he reached the sixth form and won his cap at football, in July, 1882, and entered Balliol college, Oxford, where he obtained a second class in classical moderations. After leaving Oxford, he became a member of the banking firm so closely associated with his family; and from that time onward his life was linked with his native county. On 27th October, 1887, he married Margaret, second daughter of the reverend Herbert Kynaston, D.D., head master of Cheltenham college and afterwards canon residentiary of Durham. Of the two sons and two daughters of this



HOWARD PEASE, M.A., F.S.A.



marriage one son fell in the war: the others survive him.

Two features stand out pre-eminently in the character of Howard Pease: his passionate affection for Northumberland and his addiction to all kinds of manly sport. Although serious deafness, due to an early accident at football, might well have hindered his numerous activities, he overcame its disadvantages with an admirable persistence. At Oxford he played three-quarter-back for his college Rugby team, and played golf and lawn-tennis for the university, winning the lawn-tennis singles in 1886. He met with a similar success after he came to live in the north, when he won the Northumberland and Durham singles championship. While president of the Newcastle fencing club he won the foils competition. He was an ardent fisherman, and, on taking up his residence at Otterburn Tower in 1905, devoted himself with enthusiasm to hunting. In 1910, when his mare Beeswing won the Border point-to-point race, he himself finished fourth on Grizzle. No form of out-of-door sport was alien to his taste: salmon-fishing in Norway, Sweden and Ireland, big-game hunting with his cousin, sir Alfred Pease, in Kenya Colony, and motor-boat fishing in the Bahamas, were the strenuous occupations of his holiday journeys. While the desire to excel was no doubt strong in him, his leading motive was love of these pursuits for their own sake, and, while he proved his efficiency in all to which he laid his hand, it was with a singular personal simplicity and absence of self-consciousness.

There is no gulf fixed between the passion for open-air sport and a profound sentiment for the scenes which form its habitual setting. The writer remembers one extremely competent antiquary who dated his attraction to the study of earthworks from the days when, as a racing man, his curiosity and emotion were stirred by the sight of the Devil's dyke on Newmarket heath. Howard Pease had the good fortune to spend his life in a district which is second to none in the romance of its scenery and its historical

associations. There was a strongly poetic vein in his nature which was quickened by the charmed atmosphere of the Border country. His delight in the wild countryside where he made his home was that of an active man whose working imagination was not content with contemplating the deep quietness of the heart of things, but saw in all his surroundings the symbols of human energy, peopled with voices calling from the far past. Scott would have found in him a kindred spirit, brave and unselfish, steeped in literary and historical reminiscence, full of the endeavour to record the impressions made by the visions of a bygone age which were his daily companions. Living in a house which had grown round an ancient pele-tower, he felt himself part of the history of the place, in which the borderers and moss-troopers of the past were as real to him as were his friends and neighbours. He was never happier than when he took his visitors to see the places on which his thought was always busy, the upland village of Elsdon, with its church, tower, and huge earthen castle, the ramparts of Brementium, and his favourite haunts on the line of the Wall. Every visit to such spots was a fresh experience readily welcomed, which renewed his wonder at old and far-off things. While anxious to probe the truth of the suggestions furnished by such scenes, his sense of their romance was too vivid to be greatly disturbed by merely prosaic explanations of details. The gift which he cherished, and which his friends recognized, was an insight into their essential spirit as genuine as it is rare.

He became a member of our society in 1891, and was elected a fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London in 1904. His contributions to strictly antiquarian literature were comparatively few: they include two articles in the *History of the Berwickshire Naturalists Club*, which he joined in 1903 and of which he was president in 1914, entitled *Northumberland Moorland Crosses* (vol. xxiv, pp. 319-22) and *The First Hegira of the Lindisfarne Monks with the Body of St. Cuthbert* (vol. xxv, pp. 456-62), and a



paper upon *Otterburn: the Tower, Hall and Demesne and the Lordship of the Manor of Redesdale*, printed in *Archæologia Aeliana*, 3rd ser., vol. XXI, pp. 121-31. In 1913 he produced *The Lord Wardens of the Marches of England and Scotland*, a study of distinct historical value, and in 1924 he edited *The History of the Northumberland (Hussar) Yeomanry 1879-1919*, with a supplement which brought the work down to 1923. But his most characteristic work took the form of the presentation in narrative form of Northumbrian folk-lore and legend, and between 1893 and 1927 he wrote several romances and collections of tales in which his intimacy with the life of the Border and its inner significance found free expression. *Borderland Studies* (1893), *The Mark o' the Deil* (1894), *The White-faced Priest and other Northumbrian Episodes* (1896), and *Tales of Northumbria* (1899) were followed by *Magnus Sinclair* (1904), *Of Mistress Eve* (1906), *The Burning Cresset* (1908), and *With the Warden of the Marches* (1909). In 1909 came *Border Ghost Stories*, succeeded in 1910 by *The Tragedy of Holyrood*, a dramatization of fourteen "essential scenes" from the life of Mary queen of Scots. From this more distant excursion he returned in 1927 to his own country in *Northumbria's Decameron*, a book of great charm whose literary merit was generally recognized by critics. Its inspiration, many years before, was due to bishop Creighton, to whose influence upon the author a tribute is paid in the preface. In addition to these works may be mentioned the *Memoir of Sir David Dale* (1911), written in association with sir Edward Grey, now lord Grey of Fallodon.

From time to time Howard Pease contributed articles to numerous periodicals, among others *The National Observer*, *The Gentleman's Magazine*, *The Spectator* and *Country Life*, and from October, 1900, to September, 1901, he was editor of *The Northern Counties Magazine*. He had many friends among men of letters, and the friendships which he made were as true and lasting as they were numerous. The generous hospitality of Otterburn Tower

was a privilege to be gratefully remembered by all who shared it, and many of those who read this notice will think with pleasure of that place of rest and peace, the library with its painted frieze of the battle of Otterburn, its walls lined with the fine collection of books inherited from his father and judiciously augmented by his own purchases, and will recall the delight of its owner in the treasures which he displayed with a natural modesty that enhanced their interest. The personality of the kind host and hostess, so closely united in disposition and in their instinct for all that is best in life, communicated itself in an unusual degree to their environment; and to know them was to know the attraction of Otterburn as part of their being.

It is almost unnecessary, after what has been said, to emphasize the sense of responsibility which Howard Pease brought to his public duties. Just before the outbreak of war, he was high sheriff of Northumberland: he was a county magistrate and served on many public bodies. He took special interest in the local scout movement and in the Northumbrian corps of guides promoted by the Territorial Association, both objects peculiarly connected with the life that most appealed to him. During the war he drove his own motor ambulance with untiring zeal. No better example could be found of a man who, with ample means and with tastes which may sometimes be pursued with a short-sighted exclusiveness, gave himself and all his advantages freely to the service of his fellows. The gifts which he received from his beloved Northumberland he returned with interest, with whole-hearted obedience to duty and with entire forgetfulness of self. To all who knew him and felt the influence of his character, his memory will long be part of the high traditions of the county which he felt so deeply and sought so often to celebrate; and he would have desired no better fame for himself than this.