

- A Chesebyll the grunde of White Sylk wt Popynjays of gold, the Orfrayes of grene welvet wt ymages of gold yn tabernacles wt stole fanon Albe & Amys the Orfrayes of the same wt a cope the grund Rede Sattayn wt ymages of gold the Orfrayes of grene Sattayn y set wt byrdes & Chaplets of gold of the gyft of Bugwyth.
- A Chesebyll of yalow Sylk wt Orfrayes of gold wt Albe Stole & fanon of Bordalysander wt an Amyte of Sylk rede & grene.
- Itm. ij. sencers of copyr gylt wt a Shyppe of copyr gylt, ij. crowets of Sylv'r wt a croce of sylv'r & gold and a shaft yr to sylv'yt & gylt wt a baner of grene Sylk wt Armys & schochons.
- Also ij. clothes of gold the grund of Rede Baudkyn wt pyne-applys of gold contenyng in lenght x. yards of the gyft of Dame John Bechame lady of Burgewny & remayne wt John Manitorn.
- Item. ij. Copys of Rede Sylk wolken wt grene Sylk and Dragowns off gold the Orfrayes of cheker velvet wt strakys of gold off the gyfft of Robert Chacom.
- Itm. A parell for the Autr of Steyned warke of the Natyvyte of oure lord wt a clothe before ye autr & a Reredose of the same wt ij. custos wt angels off the gyfft of Will'm. Kyllngwolm'sh.

(To be continued.)

Bisham Abbey.

By Ernest W. Dormer.

(Continued from Vol. 11, page 121.)

The custodian of Queen Elizabeth referred to in the last article was Sir Thomas Hoby, the brother of Sir Philip, says Murray, in his "Berkshire," although since the appearance of the second part of this article on the Abbey, the author has been informed by the owner (Sir H. J. Vansittart-Neale) that unfortunately the residence of the princess cannot be verified. It is known that she came here as Queen and held a Council, but previous to her coronation

the mock-virtuous detention cannot be traced. From authentic sources it appears that Sir Thomas Hoby was abroad with his brother Sir Philip in 1549, 1550, 1551, 1552, 1554 and 1555, and therefore could not have had charge of the princess during these years. John Murray, who wrote the "*Berkshire*" book himself and was known to be a very reliable authority, doubtless had some information with regard to this matter which led him to include the statement and the quotation, but it certainly seems impossible that the princess could have spent as much as three years here. Neither can her remarks as to the abilities and disposition of her custodian be authentically traced—to the owner's knowledge.

Sir Thomas Hoby was several years younger than his brother Philip, and was exceedingly fortunate, inasmuch as he was brought under the notice of the powers that be, at a very early age, owing to his brother's prosperity. He was a brilliant scholar and linguist, and was knighted at Greenwich by Queen Elizabeth previous to going as her ambassador to the Court of France. His sudden death at Paris is said by some to have been owing to his loyalty to his sovereign. In those days it evidently was not always discreet to show one's loyalty too much, for men in high places frequently came by a death which was not the result of accident or disease. It is certain that Sir Thomas had died in the prime of his life, and when he was brought home to be buried at Bisham some dark hints were thrown out by his friends and retainers. Be this as it may, he left behind him a memorial in the translation of "*The Courtier of Castiglione*." He also wrote "*The travels and lief of Sir Thomas Hoby, Kt.*," which was edited by Mr. Edgar Powell for the Royal Historical Society in 1902. It is a very interesting and careful record of journeys in parts of Italy and its near neighbours in the 16th century.

The wife of Sir Thomas, Elizabeth, a daughter of Sir Anthony Cooke, of Gidea Hall, Essex, was a remarkable woman. One of her sisters married the great Lord Burleigh. Elizabeth was destined to live to a ripe old age. She is said to have had a peculiar liking for funerals and all the pomp and ceremony that go with them. She revelled in armories and banners, black hoods and sombre hangings, and just before her death she wrote to an expert for his opinion on the etiquette and quality of her own interment. Evidence of her taste for the glorification of the departed is afforded in Bisham Church, where the two ambassadors rest beneath a gorgeous monument, emblazoned with the great shield of the Hobys with its quarterings of illustrious Welsh houses—for the family is said to have

been descended from the kings of Wales—and the shield of seven quarters for the Cookes. The middle panel of the tomb has an inscription by Lady Elizabeth which will give a little idea of the literary attainment of a woman who was fed on the Classics.

About eight years after the death of Sir Thomas Hoby, she married John, Lord Russell, son of the Earl of Bedford. She outlived him, however, and wrote his epitaph in Westminster Abbey, where he lies buried. For herself she had a tomb more elaborate even than that of her husband and his brother. A dozen escutcheons with the armorial taste of the day beautifully wrought and graced speak of those families with which she had become connected. Upon her tomb she is kneeling at a kind of fald-stool, with a coronet upon her head. Behind kneel three of her daughters and two sons, while another daughter, Anne, faces her.

Bisham has its ghost and it is intimately connected with the Dame Elizabeth. In the dining-room is her portrait, a curious picture and redolent of the Tudor period. She is represented in a coif, weeds and wimple of a widow with hands and face of intense whiteness. Her ghost is supposed to haunt the house, and when appearing she is trying vainly to wash out a spot upon her hands in invisible water in a basin which moves obligingly before her, while her emotion is strikingly apparent. When seen, the face and hands are black, and the other parts of the body white—just the reverse to the picture.

The cause of her grief and nocturnal ramblings is said to be in consequence of a restless conscience following a rash and barbarous deed. The tale goes that her young son William—whether Hoby or Russell is not known—could not write in his copy-book without making a blot. This is said to have so provoked my lady that in a fit of violent passion she beat the lad to death. Some seventy or more years ago when a window in one of the rooms was being altered the workmen made a discovery which seemed to be destined, in a very large measure, to verify the tradition. Lying between the joists under the floor, were found some children's copy-books of the reign of Elizabeth, one or two being smothered in blots. Such is the tale and such is the discovery; but it is extremely probable that the present rendering of the tradition bears but little semblance to the original, if ever one existed. There are so many incidents of legendary character that suffer to make the fame of old manor houses awesome and venerable. It need only be added that the visits of the apparition are exceedingly rare, says the present owner.

Sir Edward Hoby, the son of the Dame, was the last of the Hobys of note of Bisham. He was born in 1560, and married the Queen's cousin, Margaret Cary, daughter of Lord Hunsdon. He was knighted at his marriage. In 1592 Elizabeth paid a visit to him at Bisham, and five years later he was made Governor of Queens-boro' Castle and a gentleman of the Privy Chamber. As an author he perhaps wasted his talents only on controversial divinity. Many of his works bear a title which makes the contents sufficiently clear, such as "A Counter-snarl for Ishmael Rabshacheb," and "A Curry-combe for a Coxcombe." These tongue-envenomed tracts are said to have brought forth replies even more queerly designated. The great Camden, who dedicated his 'Hibernia' to Sir Edward, has taken several opportunities of commending his virtues and acknowledging his friendship. He died in 1617.

He had no issue by his first wife, but one named Katherine Pinkney bore him a son, Peregrine, who eventually became heir of Bisham. The last of these new Hobys, the Rev. Sir Philip Hoby, died Dean of Aldfert in 1766, and by his will Bisham went to his cousin, Mr. John Mill, who was allowed by Act of Parliament to prefix the name of Hoby to Mill, thus making his title on the death of his elder brother, Sir John Hoby-Mill, Bart. He died childless in 1780, leaving Bisham to his widow, who sold it in 1781 to George Vansittart, grandson of one Peter Vansittart, a merchant, who was born at Dantzic, and settled in England in the reign of the first Charles.

This Peter was a governor of the Russia Company and a Director of the East India Company. Robert Vansittart, one of his sons, was Regius Professor of Civil Law. Henry, another son, was Governor of Bengal and the father of Nicholas, Lord Bexley, a Chancellor of the Exchequer, who became President of the British and Foreign Bible Society. The eldest son of Peter Vansittart was a general in the forces, and the colours of one of his battalions hang from the old gallery in the great hall. Sir Edward Vansittart-Neale, the father of the owner, was the pioneer of the great Co-operative movement. His son, Sir Henry Vansittart-Neale, is the present Lord of Bisham, and has served with distinction as a civil servant, having gained his K.C.B. as Assistant Secretary to the Admiralty.

(To be continued.)