

BELTON HOUSE, GRANTHAM.

BELTON HOUSE, one of Lord Brownlow's noble and beautiful mansions, bears upon its face all the characteristics of the great architect who designed it, as his mind was expressed in his domestic creations. That architect was Sir Christopher Wren, and Belton House is chiefly noticeable, like Marlborough House and other examples from the same hand, for its dignified sobriety of character externally, and its stateliness and good arrangements within. There had been an earlier house at Belton, in which the ancestors of Sir John Brownlow, the builder of the existing mansion, had dwelt. The estate became the property of Richard Brownlow, Esq., Chief Prothonotary of the Common Pleas, who was born in 1553, and lived to be eighty-five. He had been a student of the Inner Temple, and treasurer of that society, and he received his profitable appointment on October 9th,

1591, and held it until his death. It is said to have brought him emoluments amounting to £6,000 a year, which substantial income enabled him to purchase from the trustees of the Pakenham and another family the Belton estate and other properties in Lincolnshire. The Prothonotary died in London, and his bowels were buried at Enfield, while his body was carried to Belton, where in the church is a figure of him in his official robes.

This notable lawyer had two sons, John and William, both of them baronets, and from the latter was descended Sir John Brownlow, who, in 1690, procured licence to enclose a park in Belton, Londonthorpe, and Telthorpe, about which he built a wall some five miles in circumference. He also built the house which still stands, although it has undergone some modifications. It was erected between 1685 and 1689,



THE WEST FORECOURT,