

AGECROFT HALL, LANCASHIRE.

AGECROFT HALL remains as a rare and fortunate example surviving from a great confraternity of venerable fellow dwelling-places, now perished or mostly fallen into decay, which once existed in Lancashire. Many are the changes that have passed over the mansion

since the Langleys kept house within its walls, and the incessant hum of the modern world in a busy outskirts of Manchester has filled a district which, in their time, was almost as remote as when the legionaries of the Cæsars had their quarters in Roman Mancunium. Its quadrangular

form gave light and space enough to the inhabitants, who, if the times were out of joint, could close their gates and turn their backs upon the turbulence without. The mansion stood, as it still does, upon a low tongue of land extending down from Pendlebury into the valley of the Irwell, and in a position rather unusual, for on the west side lies the edge of a steep cliff, while upon the other fronts, where now extend beautiful gardens, a moat completed the defence. The house itself is of that quaint timber and plaster style, with beams vertical, horizontal, and diagonal, quaint angles, carved oriel windows, and richly ornamental gables, which was almost universal in the old country houses of Lancashire and Cheshire. Admirable was the craftsmanship of the builders, excellent the skill they devoted to their work, proud the day of its completion.

Agecroft Hall was built in the time of Henry VII., or his successor, as the



THE ANCIENT ENTRANCE.